

first half recalls and celebrates the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. This is the festival half of the year, and it in turn has two divisions. The Christmas cycle consists of the seasons of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany. During this time the church focuses on the prophecies and events surrounding the incarnation. The Easter cycle is composed of the seasons of Lent and Easter, from Ash Wednesday through the Day of Pentecost. During these weeks we prepare for and observe the events surrounding our Lord's passion, death, and resurrection, and his sending of the Holy Spirit.

The second half of the church year is a more ordinary, non-festive time. It is the season after Pentecost, known as the Time of the Church. This season begins with the Holy Trinity (First Sunday after Pentecost) and concludes with the festival of Christ the King (Last Sunday after Pentecost). During these weeks, the church concentrates on Christ's public ministry—his sermons, parables, and miracles. It is a time of growth in faith, hope, and love—and thus green paraments are used as a symbol of this growth.

Principal festivals of the church year are Easter Day, the Ascension of Our Lord, the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Trinity, Christmas Day, and the Epiphany of Our Lord. Interspersed throughout the year are lesser festivals, commemorations, days commemorating events in church history, and other occasions.

Advent

Advent consists of the four weeks before Christmas. The name of this first season of the liturgical year comes from a Latin word which means "coming." Advent focuses on this "coming" in three ways: Christ coming in the past as the baby at Bethlehem, Christ coming in the present in Word and Sacrament and in the fellowship of the church, and Christ coming again in the future at the end of time. In Advent we prepare for the celebration of Christ's coming in the incarnation, but more importantly we prepare for his second coming, when he will make all things new and judge the world in righteousness.

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Preparation for the Church Year

The church year is a wonderful way in which we recall and celebrate the mighty acts of God. It is a reminder of God's constant activity—not only God's interventions into human history, but also his grace-filled activity among us now. Through the liturgical year we realize that we are a part of God's ongoing saving and loving activity.

For many centuries the church year calendar has shaped our worship: the readings, the sermons, the hymns and other music, the color of the paraments, and the appearance of worship space. Through a rich observance of the church year, each season and festival can make its fullest impact on the assembled congregation. The church is the grateful recipient and careful guardian of the liturgical year. Faithful observance of it is both a privilege and a responsibility. In its ministry of preparation, it is important for the altar guild to study the background and significance of the various liturgical seasons and festivals. Each day of the church year has its own unique character and message, determined by the appointed lessons for the day. Close attention to these lessons enables us to celebrate meaningfully the events in the life of our Lord and in church history.

The church year consists most basically of two parts. The

The preferred color for Advent is blue, the color of hope. The alternate color is purple, the royal color of the coming King. Blue, however, helps make apparent the differences between Advent and Lent.

One of the themes of Advent is darkness, and it is thus appropriate to use fewer candles during these four weeks. An Advent wreath may be hung or set near the altar. The wreath is a circle with four candles, and it may be covered with greens. The candles may all be white or blue, or perhaps purple if purple paraments are used. The earlier practice of using three purple candles and one pink candle no longer reflects our calendar and lectionary. On the First Sunday in Advent, the first candle is lighted during the Psalm following the First Lesson. On the Second Sunday in Advent, the first candle is lighted prior to the service, and the second candle is lighted during the Psalm. An additional candle is thus lighted during each Sunday in Advent until all four are lighted.

Advent is a time for visual restraint and simplicity. It is appropriate to omit altar flowers during these weeks of preparation, in order to provide a marked contrast with the festivity of Christmas. When there are no flowers, vases are removed from the chancel.

Advent should not be confused with Christmas. Christmas decorations, such as a Christmas tree, should not appear during Advent.

Christmas

Christmas is the festive celebration of the Nativity of our Lord, the Word made flesh. This celebration lasts for twelve days—from Christmas Eve through Epiphany Eve.

The liturgical color for Christmas is white, symbolizing the light and purity of Christ and our great joy at his birth. White is used for the twelve days of Christmas, except for the festivals of St. Stephen (December 26) and of the Holy Innocents (December 28), when red is used in observance of their martyrdom.

Greens and wreaths may be placed in the nave and narthex,

and the chancel may be adorned with abundant poinsettias. Plants, however, are never placed on the altar itself, nor should it be obstructed by decorations. If there is sufficient room, a Christmas tree (never artificial) may be set up. The tree may be bare or decorated with white lights and chrismos. If lights are used, the tree should be made fireproof. Chrismos (taken from the word "Christ monograms") are symbols of Christ which may be made by the altar guild or other members of the parish. Decorations for Christmas should not be put up until after worship on the Fourth Sunday in Advent, because early decorating robs both Advent and Christmas of their full meaning.

Especially for Christmas Eve services, candles may be placed in windows of the nave and on the ends of pews as brilliant symbols of Christ, the Light of the world. If hand candles are distributed to worshippers, all fire safety precautions should be taken. For example, the altar guild should be certain that fire extinguishers are charged and readily accessible.

A Christmas creche may be placed near the altar, although it should not detract from the prominence of the altar itself. The figures may be carried in the entrance procession on Christmas Eve or Day and then placed in the creche. The figures of the magi should be reserved until Epiphany. During the season of Christmas, the magi may be placed on a window or table near the rear of the nave or in the narthex, as a reminder of their journey to Bethlehem and of the relationship between Christmas and Epiphany.

The altar guild needs to be prepared for large numbers of communicants at Christmas liturgies and should have adequate supplies of bread and wine on the offertory table or credence, and an ample number of purificators on the credence.

Epiphany

The Epiphany of our Lord is celebrated on January 6, marking the manifestation of Christ to the whole world. The coming of the magi to Bethlehem is reported in the gospel reading for this festival, this event may be made vivid by adding the figures of

the magi to the creche during the entrance procession. Figures of the shepherds and perhaps the animals may be removed in advance.

White is the appointed color for Epiphany, a reminder that it is a festival of light.

On Epiphany Eve or following the Epiphany Day liturgy, there may be a ceremony of the burning of the greens. This may take place in the church parking lot or another safe place. Municipal permission and/or fire protection may be necessary.

The Epiphany Season

The first and last Sundays after the Epiphany are festivals. The Second through the Eighth Sundays after the Epiphany use green paraments as a symbol of our growth in knowing Jesus as God's Son.

The Baptism of Our Lord

The First Sunday after the Epiphany is the Baptism of Our Lord, in observance of his Baptism by St. John the Baptist in the Jordan River and, in that event, Jesus' designation as the Son of God. Paraments for this day are white, since it is a festival of Christ. A baptismal festival may be held on this day (see chap. 6 regarding preparations for Holy Baptism).

The Transfiguration of Our Lord

The Transfiguration of Our Lord is celebrated on the Last Sunday after the Epiphany as a climax to the season and a prelude to Lent. Paraments for the Transfiguration are white.

Ash Wednesday

Since at least the seventh century, Ash Wednesday has been observed as the first day of Lent. The name is taken from the ancient tradition of placing ashes on the foreheads of penitents. In the biblical tradition, ashes represent God's condemnation of sin, human dependence on God for life, humiliation and repentance. Ashes are a reminder of death: "earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust."

Ashes for the imposition are made from palms from the

previous year's observance of the Sunday of the Passion. The palms are cut into small pieces and burned with rubbing alcohol or solid fuel firestarters. After enough has been burned, work the ash through a fine wire mesh sieve. The ash may be mixed with a small amount of oil or water and placed in a small bowl or other container for the imposition. A lavabo bowl and towel will need to be provided for cleansing the minister's hands after the imposition of ashes.

Ash Wednesday, the most penitential day of the church year, may occur between February 4 and March 10.

Paraments for Ash Wednesday may be black (the color of ashes, humiliation, and mourning) or purple (the color of penitence).

Flowers are not appropriate on Ash Wednesday, and the empty vases should also be removed from the chancel. Other festive decorations, such as banners, are also removed. From Ash Wednesday through the Saturday of Holy Week, crosses, pictures, and statues may be veiled with unbleached linen or purple fabric, as a demonstration that Lent is a time for austerity and purification.

Holy Communion is celebrated on Ash Wednesday.

Lent

Lent is the forty-day season (not including Sundays) of preparation for Easter. Traditionally, Lent has two primary themes—Baptism and penitence—both as preparation for a worthy celebration of the paschal feast. Lent does not focus on our Lord's passion; that is the focus of Holy Week.

Paraments for Lent are purple, the color of penitence.

Flowers, being a symbol of joy, may be omitted during Lent in order to help the congregation absorb the penitential character of the season. Empty vases, of course, are always removed when not in use.

The Sunday of the Passion

The first day of Holy Week is the Sunday of the Passion, also known as Palm Sunday. The mood of this day, reflecting its double name, is a mixture of triumph and tragedy. We observe



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both Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem as well as his death on the cross.

Paraments are scarlet, the dark red color of blood. The alternate color is purple, the penitential color of Lent. It is good to have scarlet, however, to help distinguish Holy Week from the remainder of Lent.

Palms may replace flowers in the chancel for this day.

The altar guild is usually responsible for obtaining and preparing a sufficient quantity of palm branches for this day's procession. Several palm branches should be saved and dried for making ashes for the following year's Ash Wednesday liturgy.

The presiding minister may wear a scarlet or purple cope during the entrance rite on the Sunday of the Passion.

Maundy Thursday

Maundy Thursday recalls the institution of the Eucharist during the Last Supper in the Upper Room. The name of the day is from the Latin word *mandatum*, which means command. It refers to Jesus' words at the Last Supper, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another."

Paraments for Maundy Thursday are scarlet or white. Altar flowers are appropriate and should coordinate with the color of the paraments.

Holy Communion is always celebrated on Maundy Thursday. If your parish usually uses hosts (wafers), Maundy Thursday is a day to consider using real bread in order to emphasize the meal character of this sacrament.

A foot-washing ceremony, emphasizing Jesus' servanthood, is an optional part of the Maundy Thursday liturgy. A basin, a pitcher of hot water (so that it is still warm by the time of the foot-washing), an apron, and lavabo bowl and towel for the presiding minister, and a chair and towel for each participant need to be prepared before the service.

Following the Maundy Thursday liturgy, the altar is stripped as a symbolic remembrance of Christ's humiliation by the soldiers. The altar guild may be asked to assist the presiding minister by carrying the eucharistic vessels, candles, ornaments,

linens, paraments, and all other furnishings into the sacristy. The sacristy should be clean and ready for all of these items. During the stripping of the altar, a cantor or the choir sings Psalm 22 and/or 88. The chancel and altar remain bare until the Easter Vigil.

Maundy Thursday is the first day of the Triduum, the three days of intense observance of the paschal mystery. Beginning with Maundy Thursday evening, the Triduum concludes Easter Evening. It is the most sacred and important time of the entire church year.

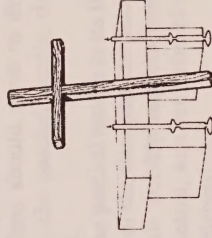
Good Friday

The original name of this day was probably "God's Friday." It is a day to celebrate the sacrifice on the cross of Christ, our Passover Lamb. The altar is bare of all linens and other furnishings. It is preferable for paraments to be omitted on Good Friday, but if they are used, they should be scarlet or black. Flowers are not used on Good Friday.

It is not Lutheran custom to celebrate Holy Communion on Good Friday; this day's focus is the cross. The altar is not used at all during the Good Friday liturgy. Instead, the rite centers at one or more reading desks.

A large rough-hewn wooden cross

may be prepared for the Good Friday Liturgy in the *Lutheran Book of Worship*. It may be placed in the narthex in readiness for its procession near the conclusion of the liturgy, or it may be placed in front of the altar (leaning against the altar or the Communion rail, or placed in a stand). A tall, lighted candle may be placed on a floor stand on each side of the cross.



If the service of Tenebrae is used, the altar guild will need to prepare a triangular candelabrum known as the Tenebrae hearse. Candles are extinguished individually following the reading of each Psalm, representing humankind falling away

from Christ. The paschal candle is not used in *Tenebrae*, it is reserved for Easter itself.

The Vigil of Easter

The Easter Vigil is the most dramatic liturgy of the year, the climax of all of our spiritual preparations during Lent and Holy Week. It is a liturgy filled with contrasts between light and darkness, freedom and bondage, life and death. The Easter Vigil liturgy consists of four parts: the Service of Light, the Service of Readings, the Service of Holy Baptism, and the Service of Holy Communion.

Easter preparations are made with white or gold paraments and flowers. Linens and ornaments that had been removed on Maundy Thursday are now replaced.

The paschal candle leads the Easter Vigil procession, and its stand should be placed in readiness near the center approach to the altar. A new paschal candle is normally acquired each year for this service. A cross, the Greek letters *alpha* and *omega*, and numerals of the current year are inscribed on the candle before the service. Traditionally the presiding minister, while doing so, says the words "Christ yesterday and today [cross]; the beginning and the end [*alpha* and *omega*]; his are all times [1] and all ages [9]; to him be glory and dominion [8], through all the ages of eternity [6]. Amen." Grains of incense are placed in readiness near the candle stand, for insertion during the Easter Proclamation.

A large fire may be built in a brazier or on the ground outside the church building, in preparation for the lighting of the paschal candle. If such a fire is not feasible, it may be struck from flint and steel.

Four to twelve biblical readings are used in the Vigil, and they should be marked in the Bible for the convenience of the lectors.

The usual preparations are made for Holy Baptism [see chap. 6]. Even if Holy Baptism is not actually celebrated at the Easter

Vigil, the renewal of baptismal vows will occur, and the font should be filled with water, or a filled ewer may be placed near the font. An evergreen bough for sprinkling may be placed near the font for use during the renewal of baptismal vows.

The usual preparations are made for the Eucharist [see chap. 7]. Consider using a loaf of raised bread as a symbolic reminder of our Lord's resurrection.

Easter

The festival of the Resurrection of Our Lord is the queen of all Christian festivals, and all preparations for its celebration should make its significance apparent. All of the furnishings and appointments should be thoroughly cleaned and polished. The best linens should be used, and they should be spotlessly white and newly ironed. Gold paraments may be used on Easter Day; white paraments are used during the rest of the Easter season. All paraments and vestments should be cleaned and ironed in preparation for the Easter celebration.

White or gold flowers are appropriate, and abundant Easter lilies and other flowers (including tulips, daffodils, and blooming azaleas) may be used to adorn the chancel. Flowers and plants, however, are never placed on the altar itself. All decorations should serve to direct worshippers' attention to the altar, the paschal candle, the font, and the pulpit or reading desk.

The paschal candle in its floor stand is placed near the gospel side of the altar (the left side as one faces the altar). It is lighted for all worship services from Easter Eve through the Day of Pentecost, as a reminder of the unity of these great fifty days of celebration.

The Eucharist should never be excluded from any Easter liturgy, since Easter is the paschal feast. The altar guild will need to prepare for large numbers of communicants, having adequate supplies of bread, wine, and purificators ready for use. (See chap. 7.)

Easter Day occurs between March 22 and April 25. The Easter celebration lasts for fifty days, and it is helpful to have

abundant flowers throughout the season (replacing them with fresh flowers as necessary, of course).

The Ascension of Our Lord

The festival of the Ascension is forty days after Easter, and it celebrates Christ's triumphant ascension from the Mount of Olives to heaven.

White paraments are used, and white flowers are fitting.

The paschal candle may be extinguished at the reading of the gospel on Ascension Day. However, it is better to allow the candle to burn through the Day of Pentecost. Regardless of when it is extinguished, it is moved after that service to its place near the font (where it is lighted only on days when Holy Baptism is celebrated).

The Day of Pentecost

The Day of Pentecost occurs fifty days after Easter. It celebrates the time when the Holy Spirit descended to the believers gathered in Jerusalem. It is, therefore, a day when decorations and ceremonies should be reminders of the Spirit.

Bright red paraments are used on the Day of Pentecost, reminders of the fire of the Spirit. Red gladioli may be used for altar flowers, since their shape suggests tongues of fire. To emphasize the importance of this festival, the chancel may be adorned with red geraniums or other red flowers. They should be arranged to call attention to the altar, although plants and flowers are never placed on the mensa of the altar. Following Pentecost worship services, the geraniums may be planted on the church grounds.

Pentecost is an appropriate day for full and festive processions, and banners may be made in preparation for the procession. Bells may be attached to the banners to add a joyous note to the day. The presiding minister may wear a red cope for the Pentecost procession.

Holy Communion is normally celebrated on this festival, and the altar guild will make the usual preparations. (See chap. 7.)

Preparation for the Church Year

Since the Day of Pentecost is an appropriate time for Holy Baptism as well as for Affirmation of Baptism (Confirmation), the altar guild should seek advance instructions from the pastor. (See chap. 6 regarding Baptism, and chap. 9 regarding Confirmation preparations.)

The Season after Pentecost

Except for festivals, Sundays after Pentecost use green paraments as a reminder that this is a season of spiritual growth.

The Holy Trinity

This festival occurs on the First Sunday after Pentecost, and it celebrates the doctrine of the Trinity, one God in three persons. Paraments are white.

Reformation Day

Reformation Day occurs on October 31, but it may be observed on the Sunday preceding that date. It is a day for giving thanks for Martin Luther and the other reformers, but it also calls attention to the ongoing need for renewal of the church. Paraments are bright red.

All Saints' Day

This festival commemorates all the baptized people of God who have died in the faith. All Saints' Day is November 1, but it may be observed on the Sunday following that date. The liturgical color is white.

Thanksgiving

Although it is a civil rather than a religious holiday, it has become common for churches to hold worship services on Thanksgiving Eve or Day. The liturgical color is white. Restrained decorations of the fruits of the earth—such as grapes, sheaves of grain, ears or stalks of corn—are appropriate, but should not draw attention away from the altar.

Since the word Eucharist comes from the Greek word for thanksgiving, it is fitting to celebrate Holy Communion at

Thanksgiving. Real bread rather than wafers may be used, as a reminder that God uses the fruits of the earth for God's gracious purposes.

Christ the King

The last Sunday after Pentecost celebrates the kingship of Christ and is so named. The liturgical color is white.

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Organization

To be effective servants of the liturgy, an altar guild needs to be organized in a way that facilitates its work. Criteria for membership and principles of organization are established by the pastor and the parish worship committee, and are approved by the church council. A sample constitution is included in appendix B of this book.

Membership

An important qualification for all members of the altar guild is a sense of awe in the presence of the Holy God. This awe gives rise to the spirit of reverence that is so essential to the altar guild's work. The ministry of liturgical preparations is a high privilege for a Christian, and dedicated altar guild members will carry out their responsibilities with awe, joy, gratitude, and love for their Lord. Tasks of the altar guild are not a burden but a delight, not a duty but a high privilege. There is no room in the altar guild for complaining or grumbling. If the work cannot be done with joy and a sense of privilege, a replacement should be sought.

Another important characteristic is humility. While it is necessary for altar guild members to be skilled in various ways, each member is only one among many servants of the liturgy. The privilege of serving God is shared with other altar guild

yourself. You may sense the presence of God when you recall your baptism, or at prayer, or in hearing the word of God. But few moments in life reach you as directly as does this weekly opportunity at the Lord's Supper.

What are you thinking as you receive the bread and wine, or when you return to your chair and listen to the choir and the organ, or, sometimes better, when you enjoy the silence broken only by the footfall of the communing people and the word "for you" spoken to each? What are you thinking as you join in the brief hymn to the LAMB OF GOD who "takes away the sin of the world"?

The act of communing takes but seconds, and participating in a congregational COMMUNION only a few minutes. Today, as so often before, you resolved to use the time to good advantage. Will you have done so? Admit it, some days your resolve goes as quickly as it came. You were going to concentrate on the "for you . . . for forgiveness." Instead your mind wandered, and you cannot later recall anything at all of what passed through it. Not a trace of ecstasy went with this personal moment in the meal. You were in the presence of God and, had it not been for the slight nervousness you felt going up to the front of an assembly, you might have stifled a yawn. You let some passing thing distract you. A scuff on the shoe of the minister. The smell of nicotine on a ministerial hand. The choir singing a bit flat, a jar to your musical sensibilities. A candle dripping on the new church carpet. Had you remembered to have that spot removed from the back of your coat? What will people think? Who donated those altar flowers? Will I get a raise this week?

Here you are, back in your seat. Should you feel guilty about having let the moment pass? Isn't it just human nature to have a wandering mind? You really don't believe the people who claim they can clear their heads and have pure and constant contact with God. There must be a lot of hypocrites here. Why did so little happen?

4. Reflections during Communion

The minutes of reflection during Communion do not allow time for developing a well-rounded theology. Indeed, they hardly suffice for sustaining a simple sequence of serious thought. But one can use this time, with or without some hymns or prayers, to place a few little mental levers on a few spiritual fulcrums, in order to lift them at other times, in other places. One might reflect, for example, on the feelings experienced, the forgiveness received, the presence promised, or the commitment entailed.

Experience

What am I supposed to feel? Am I *supposed* to feel? The whole idea of receiving forgiveness of sins implies recognizing how far you are from God and in how much need you stand. But what if you do not *feel* guilty or agonized?

You have to admit that different personality types will react variously. William James talked about "the sick soul" and "the healthy-minded" as psychological models. The sick soul will have no difficulty feeling in need of forgiveness. The trembling of a leaf has made hearts leap in fear from Leviticus to Luther to modern times. The whole universe seems then to be personified. It takes the form of the accusing finger of God. The victim of such sickness may simply be working out some problem left over from a bad childhood. Parents placed too many restrictions on the conscience, and adult life became nothing more than a "Do I dare?" or "Someone is watching!" Such a person hesitates to take bold action, fearing the consequences.

When time for confession comes, such a sick soul is like a junkie let loose in a pharmacy: All the options are there, in dazzling array. If you are a sin-sick soul, as the psalmist was when he made a river of his bed because of tears, you are able to spill out whole catalogs of faults. So you examine the recesses of the heart and there find every kind of ugliness. You have not done anything worse than anyone else, but you feel worse. You know that before God the greatest faults, while they may mess up human relations more than do the sneaky little faults, violate above all the divine image. True, God forgives them as completely as others, but you still feel they demand a heroic assault.

Once upon a time you were taught to load up everything for a bimonthly crusade against sins at Communion. If you were fortunate, your church encouraged private confession. While you could and should always confess your faults against the person you offended, all faults, especially hidden ones, were faults against God. The minister became a representative person who could speak as it were for God. Ministerial words also became symbolic ways of hearing the human race reaffirm you. They personalized the congregation. God was gracious, but now the human family was shown to include "gracious others."

If you did not make a private confession, every Communion service included a group opportunity for exposing your sinfulness to God through rite and ceremony. If such confessions stood the risk of turning routine—and you had to admit that the pose of the average congregation suggested that most people were pretty casual about what they were saying and doing—for you, at times at least, they were wonderful instruments for unburdening. You placed your sins on the strong shoulders of Christ, and the minister in the name of God absolved you of, or forgave,

those sins. Somehow you had to work out a logic by which you again brought them to the Lord's Table only minutes later. Since it was "for forgiveness," you were to leave sins there and walk back to the pew refreshed, with a clean slate on which to start piling up a whole new batch of sins.

Seriously, you knew that this script was not how it was supposed to work. Popular piety had things a bit wrong here. When you gathered your thoughts in an adult study class, the accent was different. There you heard a translation of the phrase *simul iustus et peccator*: You are at the same time the just person made just by the act of Christ, and the sinner kept sinful by your humanity and your acts. "At the same time" meant that when God looked at you in Christ, through Christ, because of Christ—which figuratively meant at you in your baptismal robes, identified with Christ, or here at supper with him—God did not see you as a half-safe, half-sinful being. You were not 99 and 44/100% clean and every day in every way getting better and better through positive thinking about the cross. No, God looked at you and saw Christ. Insofar as God made you just through the grace of Christ which you received in faith, you lacked nothing.

"At the same time" also meant that the God who looked at you when you stood apart from Christ saw nothing to like. This God was not impressed by your claim to have met the Lord. A bumper sticker asserting that you were born again or had received the Holy Spirit meant no more spiritually than do the annual rival claims that Notre Dame or Texas or Nebraska are number one in football. In fact, your greatest temptation—not to need God—occurred precisely in your spiritual life. Especially in our time, when *Psychology Today*, Eastern religions, and scores of Christian movements peddle techniques for meditating, you are tempted to buy into one of these mechanisms and put a claim upon God. When competitive Christian

television programs teach you how to praise God better than others, and be more pious than others, there is a danger that you will use your praise and piety to bind God, to take away the freedom of God. You will be saying, "Notice me, Lord!" All the while you are therefore not relying in faith on the gift of Jesus Christ. You are busy parading virtues, and God is saying, "Forget it! Your virtues at their best are not good enough."

The fact that you feel the need to do such parading suggests that you are a sick soul and need a remedy. You have come, then, to the right place. There is no magical transaction called confession/absolution, or confession/Lord's Supper. But in this meal you receive the gifts of Jesus Christ. You did not earn them and you did not earn a place at this banquet, but by baptism you are identified and united with Christ. As in baptism you symbolically came out from under the water, gasping for life because you had been "dead," so literally—in the Christian scheme—you did already die, and rose, with Christ. When you go to the Lord's Supper, then, as you kneel you are not bringing your adding-machine totals of the sins you want forgiven. You are bringing your whole self in need, and with the loaf and the cup you are receiving the forgiveness that assures you that your whole self is full of well-being.

You know, then, what you are supposed to feel.

William James also spoke of the religion of "the healthy-minded." He thought it was especially attractive to those who joined the Christian Science movement, liberal Protestantism, or something that was then called New Thought. Such people believed that there was an essential harmony to the universe, that all they had to do was tap into it. Mortal mind or negative thinking might interrupt the flow, but a person could realize a return to the original harmony. Such a system of faith is at odds

with the Christian drama that proclaims a disruption of that harmony. Humans created and create discord and chaos. They do not hear the purity of the angels on the morning of creation. They do not stir to the trumpets of the messengers of God. They toot their own horns and sing their own praises. Well-being is not a part of a flow. It is a divine gift that interrupts all our natural ways of expecting wholeness.

While healthy-mindedness as a system is beyond the scope of this Lord's Supper, the healthy-minded psychological style is present among Christians. The Bible and Christian history display characters who did not make a river of their beds with tears. Martin Luther may have felt threatened by a thousand devils and by a judging God who was too near, but in your healthy-mindedness you do not. You see no point in pretending. You find nothing especially attractive or Christian in those otherwise blithe people who think they please God by bowing lowest, kneeling longest, and groveling most visibly: "Look, God, I really got good at confessing!"

The healthy-minded or blithe Christian type is a personality that, fully aware of the fallenness of creation, grasps its beauty instead. After the resurrection of Christ, the first signs of a new order, a new creation, are here for affirming. This kind of Christian takes bits of sand and dye, fuses them, and produces stained glass through which you see the sun break on the sanctuary floor with a foretaste of heavenly sparkles. The New Creation Christian takes the disordered sounds of diesel engines, clanging pots, and scuffling feet and reorders them into scales and tones until you hear overtones of the music of the spheres. This Christian walks the hospital corridors aware of death but sings quiet songs because God is also at work healing. Healthy-mindedness is not positive thinking apart from God but a psychological and spiritual bearing

that finds God to be not the Judge but the One who intended and intends concord.

The blithe type lives with spiritual hazards that are as great as those brought by the grovelers. If you find yourself toward the healthy-minded part of the spectrum, you may use the Lord's Supper as a time to become especially alert to these dangers. The silences for self-examination are excellent opportunities for this. You might be riding for a fall. That is, you may be sunny about your faith because you have not yet been tested. No cloud has yet shadowed you. Wait until you find that your child is suffering from a debilitating disease. Let an economic disaster wipe out your assets. Some day someone important to you will find great fault with you and announce a breach. For all the smiles in the world, you cannot backslap your way into a new relation. Then some of the illusions with which you lived will drop.

Healthy-mindedness may imply a faulty spiritual diagnosis. You have heard the familiar statements of what Dietrich Bonhoeffer calls cheap grace: "I like to commit sins. God likes to forgive them. The world is admirably arranged." Or "I can sin; that's my business. God will forgive; that's the business God is in. We will keep each other busy." These are flippant translations of attitudes that color many easy lives. None of them measures the cost to God of the cross or the cost to humans of discipleship. Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it becomes nothing. But if it dies, it brings forth fruit. No one follows Jesus without taking up a cross and denying the self. Jesus knew what was in humans and searchingly stripped the disciples themselves of their claims upon God—because Jesus loved his disciples and did not want them to rule God out of their lives by their casualness.

In order to be sure that healthy-minded psychological types come to spiritual depth, the preacher in every sermon

will proclaim the law of God. In some contexts, the law of God is God's power that enables one to see what it is that care of the neighbor establishes. But in the present context, the law of God does nothing but accuse. You thought you were doing all right because you did not kill? Jesus says that if you hate, you are a murderer. You thought you were pretty healthy because you stayed married and faithful to one partner and never committed adultery? You all have committed adultery when you merely looked, or even thought, lustfully. Martin Luther liked to say that if you did not feel sinful you should reach inside your clothes and pinch yourself to see if you are still flesh and blood.

What are you supposed to feel? In some epochs and some congregations, preachers and counselors have to cool people off. Don't feel so much, they say; you are so busy enjoying your miseries that you do not even recognize that there is a Physician and that he has cured. But you, if you are healthy-minded, live in a different kind of age and place. Most sermons urge you to probe yourself more deeply. But you can build a wall against God if you start making the relation with God the basis of your own self-esteem; that will not work. The preacher's admonition to self-examination need not force you to change your personality type or your outlook on the New Creation. It only asks you to be serious. You are to see things not through illusion but as they are. The Christian faith calls you to realism about the disharmonious universe in which babies die, the innocent die, and you will die. There is a fundamental lack of fit in the way the world is now put together apart from Christ, and its misfit character will not go away this side of eternity, despite the victory of Christ.

What are you, then, supposed to feel? If not sniveling, weebegone, sub-Christian blues, you are to acquire awareness. You who are called "miserable sinners" may not feel miserable. But—to update an old illustration

from the era of trains—like occupants of an aircraft in which a time bomb is set in the baggage compartment, though you feel fine about your martini and your magazine, you *are* miserable. You are part of the misfit situation. You need rescue. You need help. At the Lord's Table it is not necessary for you to conjure up all kinds of *emotions*; you simply need to be *aware* of need and to realize the forgiveness of sins.

Forgiveness

Some weeks at the Lord's Supper you might wish to set your lever for reflection under another great burden: the concept of forgiveness. That this forgiveness of sins is "for you" is now clear by everything in the event, but what is forgiveness? Do we exaggerate its importance?

Jesus made much of it when he chose to forgive a person in need of physical healing, even though that meant offending the religious leaders. Give those leaders credit. They asked, with a proper sense of regard for holy things, "Who can forgive sins but God?" They were not likely to cheapen forgiveness. Paul busied himself with writing letters telling people how the forgiven should learn to live together as Jew and Gentile, male and female, bond and free. But along the way he spent many energies detailing what forgiveness meant for him and his readers. Through Christian history Augustine and Bernard of Clairvaux, Martin Luther and John Calvin, and a large company of others saw forgiveness as a central image for the basic movement of a loving God to mortals.

So it is that in the late twentieth century we have inherited something we can call "the doctrine of the forgiveness of sins." Whole church bodies claim it as their possession. It is their badge and banner. With it they make their claim, "We're number one!" They use it to show what all the second bests look like, because the others own

lesser chunks of the doctrine or because they have it all wrong. In the nineteenth century, Americans paraded their Monroe Doctrine. One night a man was tarred and feathered and run out of town. A stranger came upon the miserable victim and asked him what had happened. It seems that there had been a loyalty test and a dispute about this aspect of foreign policy. What had the tarred man said or done wrong? He answered, "I didn't say I don't love the Monroe Doctrine. I do love the Monroe Doctrine. I live by the Monroe Doctrine. I would die for the Monroe Doctrine. I simply said I don't know what it is." We wonder whether the people with the tar pots and baskets of feathers knew.

You are at the Lord's Table, assured that the forgiveness of sins comes "for you." It is easy to think, "I belong to the right club. I can show God the right credentials. I am loyal to my tribe. I love the doctrine of the forgiveness of sins. I live by the doctrine of the forgiveness of sins. I would die for the doctrine of the forgiveness of sins. But I simply do not know what it is." If so, you have difficulty reflecting on it at Holy Communion. You wish to do better.

First of all, remember that a doctrine does not save. God saves. You need not even call it a doctrine, especially in times when many people use that word to suggest that the life has already gone out of a reality. In their minds—and why play into their problems?—a doctrine is a gravestone you place over the bones of something that once lived. It is a boundary you place around something your ancestors found important. A doctrine or a dogma is an attempt by humans to define the indefinable, to step across the boundaries of mystery and speak overconfidently about the secrets of God. In a time when people do not know who they are, they use the idea of a doctrine to set boundaries. In that case, a doctrine is not a witness to their

love of truth but a mark of their sense of mutual suspicion. Since you cannot trust anyone, you have to ask whether they line up on the wrong or right side of a precisely defined doctrine. The fact that doctrines and dogmas have other, better uses is not of much help here. Let other people on other days rescue the concept of doctrine. You are a hungry person needing food, not recipe books. You seek the forgiveness of sins at the Lord's Supper.

Second, since in church you have time for clarity but not research, you might want some day to study the way forgiveness of sins may be an obsolete badge of distinction for a church body or two. The Spirit of God works surprises these days, and the spread of divine grace is sufficiently broad that what once looked like a unique property or witness of an evangelical church now turns up on many hands. Four centuries ago, reformers of the church looked around and honestly did see some Christians turning God's gift of forgiveness into a human transaction. People were using their energies to impress God. The faithful bought or visited relics, went on pilgrimages, pursued processions, paid for masses, purchased indulgences, and did what they could to buy the favorable attention of God. They were just as often busy piling up merits to impress God, so that God dared not act unfavorably to people who were owed so much for having helped keep the universe on track. No matter how ecumenical one's spirit, those pages of history cannot be obscured. Roman Catholics, heirs of that unreformed Christianity, today point this out in very public scholarship.

Unreformed Christianity underwent reform. You will hear some people who feel called to draw boundaries for God saying that wrong teachings about forgiveness are still on those other churches' books. Maybe it would be nice if church bodies did feel obliged to retrace their steps to all

the old libraries and councils, call new councils, and bring out their erasers. But churches do not work that way. They write with far more vivid new inks over fading pages. Today it is more valuable to listen to evangelical Catholic sermons, where the message of the forgiveness of sins comes through loud and clear. *The Jerusalem Bible*, which Catholic scholars and publishers would like to see in every home, is a highly public document. Its footnoted versions stress the free gifts of the forgiveness of sins in every crucial passage. This is disappointing to some leftover anti-Catholics. What fun is the Lord's Supper, if there are fewer people to be anti- as we enjoy it? But a Christian spirit also impels you to express joy for the spread of grace. This realization, plus common agreement over the meaning of Christ's presence in the Lord's Supper, has built a sense of holy but not yet constant frustration among many Roman and other catholic Christians. Why do we stay apart at the Lord's Table? Who are we to build fences where the Host does not?

A third focus for reflection is this: You do not need the words *forgiveness of sins* to express the new relationship you have to God in Christ. In some ways, these words can be code words, a metaphor through which Christians can connect with many biblical themes. Through most of the pages of the Hebrew Scriptures that you call the Old Testament, repentance and forgiveness are not the prime statements. Yet the Old Testament is the church's book. God was active among his people. This God was a loving, caring, and, yes, forgiving agent. The Hebrew Scriptures busied themselves with talking about how God was shaping a people and covenanting with them out of steadfast love.

In the Gospels, Jesus is the bearer of forgiveness, but forgiveness is not the only word on his lips. Jesus calls for obedience. He asks for discipleship. Because, for many,

forgiveness symbolizes the basic trajectory of God's movement to humans, they expect to hear about nothing else. Yet Jesus does what the situation demands. When someone is ill, Jesus *may* be abrupt: "Your sins are forgiven!" But just as often he may simply heal the physical illness, and we do not hear about outcomes having to do with forgiveness. His Good Samaritan is someone who pours on oil and wine and foots the bill for the clinic, without—so far as we know—passing out tracts or preaching sermons on forgiveness.

Paul, who had persecuted the church, found it easy to feel agony over guilt. He was tortured by his need for forgiveness. So he became a proclaimer par excellence of that teaching. But, as we already noted, he spent as much time telling the forgiven how to live together, or to have holy lives, as to be forgiven. So you too do not need to have a specific code word or formula in mind when you want to realize the gift of the Lord's Supper.

When your church wrote its older books of worship and teaching, debate over forgiveness was prime. Martin Luther was of the sick-souled type, who projected his struggles from the monastery onto the movement that followed him. In the modern play *Luther* John Osborne has Luther railing against the empty heavens, as if God were remote: "God is dead." The real Luther had the opposite problem. For him the heavens were full and close, and God was too near, too threatening. A holy God might annihilate an unholy human. Divine perfection could not coexist with human imperfections. The monk tried every rule and every discipline, but still each trembling leaf caused him to cower. When, in the writings of Paul, Luther discovered the forgiveness of sins, the monk naturally chose to use it as the basic image of the loving divine movement.

Today, it is often noted, many people have a different problem. They are there with John Osborne's fictional

Luther. Their God is remote. Where Luther asked, "Is God gracious?" they ask, "Is God?" Their doubts may not lead them to verge on simple atheism. Such Christians put their problem in different ways. They will complain about the lack of meaning in their lives. Where once the simplest peasants could endure every kind of setback because God would reward them in heaven, now eternal life has become a very vague concept for them. While once God seemed to be pronouncing a perpetual benediction on their towns, so that all knew their places, now urban life seems plotless. Typical words that people use—perhaps you use—to describe the modern condition in which most of us share are alienation, brokenness, meaninglessness. We seek reconciliation, wholeness, meaning.

Say words like reconciliation, wholeness, and meaning, and you come very close to the center of Christian witness. Jesus Christ reconciles God to humans, and humans to each other. Wholeness virtually serves as a synonym for salvation, for well-being under God. Jesus Christ the risen one brings meaning because he is the first sign of the New Creation, the new order of being. It is hard to see why anyone should feel guilty about using words like these to express the experience of grace in the Lord's Supper. Christ the physician offers the gift of a cure for what ails us. If he and we have varying names for the disease—and thus, in a way, subtly different diseases—we shall welcome marvelously varied remedies. Forgiveness of sins, then, is a blanket term for the whole relationship that Jesus effects and which is "for you" in the Lord's Supper when grasped by faith.

While writing these pages, I had occasion to consult Edmund Schlink's *Theology of the Lutheran Confessions* to see what he and they had to say on this subject. Under "Forgiveness" the index said, "see Gospel; Justification; Lord's Supper; Word of God." Under three of those four categories "forgiveness" did not appear at all; the book

treats it as a synonym for gospel and justification! Under "Word of God," there are seven brief references to the subcategory "of forgiveness." One of these citations does suggest synonymy: "forgiveness of sins is the same as justification" in the confessional writings. And Schlink develops a thesis: "The Gospel is the word of forgiveness through which God justifies the sinner for Christ's sake"; indeed, the Gospel, say the confessions, is "the promise of forgiveness of sins and justification because of Christ."

When we introduce the "-ation" words like "justification," it is easy to clutter and confuse the mind of a modern person who wants to experience forgiveness, to realize wholeness, in the event of the Lord's Supper. How are you to think of what the code words suggest? Most important is the idea that you do not bring something with which to impress God. God shatters whatever is in your hand. The law of God accuses and annihilates you. Then God, acting through and because of Christ, creates a new you, a baptized person-in-Christ. That is what it means to be a forgiven person, to experience an act or a motion of divine forgiveness.

You can now see why this forgiveness is the core of Holy Communion. The body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper are the body and blood of Christ on the cross. The cross was for you, and so is the Supper. In the meal the cross is a present-day reality. The risen and ascended Christ is present in this form and at this event. Just as preaching, received in faith, is not mere talk about forgiveness but actually works forgiveness, so the Lord's Supper, received in faith, is not a pageant displaying the story of a forgiving God. It is God in action, effecting forgiveness, creating the new. The Large Catechism uses vivid language about the Lord's Supper not as a prescription but a remedy: "For here in the sacrament you receive from Christ's lips the forgiveness of sins, which contains and conveys God's grace and Spirit with all his

gifts, protection, defense, and power against death and the devil and all evils." Maybe you had not quite counted on having to take on "the devil and all devils," but this remedy is designed to help you do just that. And there may be a better way of conceiving what is wrong than the way of superficial diagnoses about personality types, symptoms of imbalance, Oedipal complexes, or maladjustment to the modern condition. The Lord's Supper is "the food of the soul since it nourishes and strengthens the new person." It is "a pure, wholesome, soothing medicine which aids and quickens in both soul and body. For where the soul is healed, the body has benefited also." Here is another bonus, and you do not have to join a therapeutic club in the church to share the benefit.

Forgiveness means liberation. Classically, this liberation refers to freedom from sin, death, and the devil. But it is possible to hear of this only in the context of middle-class America and not to envision all the other settings in which Christians look for liberation. In the concentration camps the Lord's Supper meant forgiveness of sins, but it also depicted a zone of human freedom into which believers hoped God would lead them again. Under governments that repress the faith, communicants cannot help but include their prayers and hopes for escape from such bondage. Late in the twentieth century in Latin America and elsewhere in what is called the Third World, Christians hungry for political and economic freedom have developed a "liberation theology." In its terms, worshippers want the Lord's Supper to be freed from the cozy bindings in which the rich celebrate it.

To the liberation theologian, many biblical motifs have come to be neglected by churches in prosperous nations. Throughout the Old Testament, the Lord of Israel is especially active among the poor and overrun. Jesus Christ clearly announces that he has also come to the oppressed and wants to work for change in their life. In that thrust,

the death of Jesus and the Lord's Supper are gifts to the poor and oppressed, who, it is said, feel less the weight of sin than they do the bondage produced by humans who exploit them. Such reasoning is understandable among people who know little freedom and have nothing earthly to look forward to under their present regimes. Secure and well-off Christians do well not to judge these brothers and sisters but to understand them when they tie together their dreams of political freedom on the one hand with their grasp of grace and liberation from sin on the other. The two are not the same thing, but freedom is contagious, and acts of imagination can help Christians everywhere share one another's aspirations and hopes that God will act.

Obsession with the code term *forgiveness of sins* has sometimes led partisans to narrow the meanings of the Lord's Table. They feel it wrong to connect eucharist or thanksgiving with the Supper because it may detract from the main theme. Yet the Great Thanksgiving is wholly preoccupied with being thankful to the loving God who not only created the world but also establishes in it a new relation with you. Others see forgiveness as in competition with the idea of communion, which some churches make central. But this is also unnecessarily cramping. Another of the Lutheran confessions connects the two: The same Lord's Supper that forgives is also "a true bond and union of Christians with Christ their head and with one another." We are, through this gift, "incorporated into the body of Christ, which is the church." Because we and others share unmerited forgiveness, we are on the same level at the Lord's Table. We have to be very careful about placing different levels where God does not, and about ruling people away whom Christ includes at his Supper.

Presence

What do we mean by the presence of Christ in this Supper?

I almost wish you had not brought this up. Perhaps if one could compute all the serious reflections that people bring to the Table, this issue of the presence would rank third. Whoever studies the history of dispute over the sacrament or listens to present-day theological debate might conclude that it is the number one issue. Why? It provides grist for intellectual debate and becomes a kind of test for people who like to sharpen their philosophical tools on things sacred. Being a historian of Christianity, I find it hard to look at the record without adding that if there is any feature of the Lord's Supper that brings out the meanest growls from partisan Christians, this is it. While the faithful people have the least difficulty with the theme, and while the New Testament offers almost no light, the subject naturally comes up in the mind of anyone who wants to be neat and inclusive in thought about the Lord's Supper.

To begin at the end, most writers on the subject say that the precise mode of Christ's presence is a mystery. Then they define mystery not as you do in a mystery story, where by the end of the book everything is clear—the butler did it; there is a conclusion, and the mystery ends. In a deeper sense mystery means rather that if you pull away one veil, another will still cover the subject; one could pull back veils for all the years that history gives and still not have exposed the subject to clear view. Emphatically, the presence of Christ is such a mystery. There can be honest and creative addresses to mystery, such as people make when they witness to the character of God, and less valid ones, of the sort one reads when people convince themselves they really have proved the existence of God or philosophically explained away the origin and presence of evil.

The special problem with the presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper grows from the fact that the Scriptures are so nearly silent about it. This means that the Lord's Supper

is used to fill in many blanks. Other teachings are like barnacles attached to it, and it gets connected to other doctrines. Of course, it links with one's concept of where the risen and exalted Jesus Christ is, and whether Christ can reveal the fullness of God in earthly and finite forms. We leave those filled-in blanks and connected doctrines for other authors in other books for other days. You have the Lord's Supper on your mind.

Bring up the presence of Christ and you enter the zone where intellectuality has made its greatest mark on practice. In some churches, one gets the impression that to escape unworthiness—Paul's term for the unexamined life at the Lord's Supper—one must have a certain IQ. It would seem to be necessary for communicants to be able to mouth a precise number of memorized catechismal formulas. The church might make exception for the people in homes for the retarded, who are allowed to get by on simple affirmations of faith in Jesus Christ and a desire for the Lord's Table. But beyond them, those who merit access to Communion are those who have the prescriptions down cold. The twentieth-century church is trying to learn how to hold together two ideas: the integrity of understanding the Lord's Supper and the need not to impose barriers that the Pauline and Gospel accounts clearly do not erect. At the very least, one can learn not to attribute a mean spirit and bad faith to other Christians who are at least as concerned as you are to be faithful to the documents and the truth but who come off with a different reading.

You will never find an intellectually satisfying formula for the presence. Write that down and remember it as you read all the books, by people on your side and by others. In the end the honest writers all have to lapse back for a second to the language about mystery, where they began. Some of them succeed at representing accurately their own

church's teaching; they deserve awards from historical societies. Others ingeniously connect their personal philosophy to the teaching; they merit rewards from philosophical societies, though it is hard to picture a single philosopher likely to be impressed. My tone here might verge on the satirical and the antiintellectual. I do not intend that, since I, too, respect and even regard as necessary the idea of "loving God with all the mind" and extending this to the mode of Christ's presence in the Lord's Supper. But here is a case where it is necessary to expect only small returns on expensive investments.

The Lord's Supper service has room for some ethereal images like that of the "thrice-holy" that faced Isaiah in the temple. But at the most personal point the sacrament is very physical. Just as God is revealed in the bad grammar of the well-preached word, so now you have to think in rather crass terms about another mode of the presence. The same kind of bread you will eat at home this noon is on this table. The wine here is similar to what you can have at dinner. You pass them through the same mouth. They carry the same germs. One may harden, the other turns sour, like any other bread and wine. People with bad breath and cavities receive them past droopy mustaches or elegantly tinted lips. Keep the crude images in mind, since no other ones will keep to the forefront the offense and the scandal. This food will pass through the body and be digested and excreted through natural processes. Jesus knew all about that when he pointed to bread and said "This—my body!" and when he lifted a cup and gave it with "This—my blood!" (Some scholars think that, where the Greek text uses the much fought-over word *is*, the language Jesus spoke led him simply to designate.)

You move to the Table and are given the gifts with the words "The body of Christ. . . . The blood of Christ," not "the bread of the earth, the wine of the vine." What are

you to think? Christ is somehow present in form as body, not as ghost. Christ is present in the whole church and in this congregation, in the whole event of the Lord's Supper—but also here and now. Christ is not naturally at home in your heart; there is no room for him there. But now more-than-naturally he finds room through your whole body, through faith, which also means because you hear the word promising his coming, and you cling to that promise. The promise means God recognized that in faith you accept the gift of Christ's presence, and God sees you as "one body" with all others who are in Christ, who receive this body and blood. When the minister hands over the bread or the cup, this handing over takes the same trajectory as the whole shape of God's act in Christ: Christ is handed over to evil people and for the sake of life.

One recent pondering, Robert Jenson's *Visible Words*, points to certain problems connected with two main theories about the presence. The first depends on the power of consecration—remember that ministerial sign of the cross above the bread and wine and how you thought *now* they are being changed? This approach set out to show how God, who can do anything, could make two things into one without destroying either. This is not an unintelligent approach, but it is an unnecessary one. The people who made so much of the act of consecrating were not too interested in explaining the presence. They wanted, as you do not, to carve out a role for the priesthood, to give priests a monopoly on something. Nothing worked better for this than to assert the exclusive right of the priest to a consecrating act that made two things one and yet kept them two things. Today Roman Catholicism has moved far from this concept, though it is still busy redefining evangelical priesthood.

Another way to explain the presence is to use spiritual language in order to remove distance. Yes, it says, by faith

we can see that Jesus overleaps distance and is "at the right hand of the Father." Since distances mean nothing in the spiritual realm, that right-hand position extends here to the altar where the bread and wine are. But this approach makes Christ's presence conditional on your ability to imagine him being far and near; the presence is not straightforwardly here. This understanding also seems to shrink from the idea that the divine or the human can ever be embodied. Christians cannot leap out of their bodies to be spiritually with Christ at the right hand of the Father.

A third approach is more radical than these. The body of the risen Christ is not separated from any reality. Christ has risen in the body to be where God is. God is everywhere. If the risen Christ is, according to promise, embodied where this bread and this cup are, the only miracle you need to believe in is Christ's own resurrection. God is present wherever the promises of God are in effect. These promises are embodied. God has a body where these promises connect to the man Christ Jesus, or to this event called the Lord's Supper and the bread and the cup that are at its heart.

This bread and wine are, in the eyes of God, the presence of the man Jesus. No other body and blood of Christ are to be found by means of better telescopes in farther ranges of distance above the clouds. The risen Jesus is risen to new spiritual and bodily life, so we can now be audacious about the promises and say that the bread and the cup *are* the body. But this is true only for faith. The presence is hidden. The bread does not look like his body, and it did not do so when first he made the designation and offered the promise about his embodiment in the meal. There is more to Christ than this local and temporal presence. This "more" has to do with Christ's future when the word will be preached and when the bread and wine will be enjoyed again in this event. That is why after the service today the

ministers—or anyone—can consume the leftover wine and bread. Forget about the elements then. If their power as Christ's body depended upon consecration, you would have to be deconsecrate them or save them for ongoing power. The choice you make shows how you regard this event.

Within our generation it is not likely that all Christians will come to agree on this or on any other version of the presence. Remember my first words in this connection: These efforts could do no more than draw away some veils while leaving others to surround the mystery.

Commitment

You may find it valuable to reflect on still one other feature of the Lord's Supper. What does this event have to do with my way of life?

By concentrating on what passes through your mind during the liturgy, we have sounded rather churchly and even churchy. These reflections might have the smell of incense and the glow of candles about them, and thus they lose contact with the surrounding world. Yet you may spend all but a couple of your 168 weekly hours outside the sanctuary. Debates about catechisms and dogma will almost never come up there. The test of this Lord's Supper and its workings will be in the lives of communicants.

In the oldest words we have about this meal, in First Corinthians, Paul concerned himself with connecting Communion practices with the lives of the participants. Many of them lived in open scandal. That had to stop. Others made a noisy orgy out of the eucharist itself. Paul drew the congregation up short with questions: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?" (1 Cor. 10:16-17). That word *participation* is an urgent link between the

liturgy and Jesus Christ and then between Jesus Christ and all the rest of life. An exchange is going on here; in fact, behind the Greek word translated "participation" stands the word *exchange*. In a sense, Jesus Christ, the son of God and divine Savior, exchanges roles when he takes on flesh, humbles himself, gives himself in this bread and wine, and suffers death. And for that reason you undergo an exchange and get to share in the divine gifts and life.

No one should walk away from the Lord's Supper unchanged. It is good to use the visibility of Communion and its bodily actions as an occasional means to reflect on personal commitment. You may have heard some experts advise that congregations be kept busy singing hymns during Communion so that they will not accidentally glance up and see who else is at the Lord's Table. A good-looking person of one sex may distract an observer of the other. The sight of someone you cannot stand could disturb you. (In which case, why were you not reconciled before this hour? Seeing the person is a reminder of ongoing work for you!) We could turn this around: Seeing movement to the Table is an announcement of intentions. Not "Look at me, folks, how pious I am for being here!" The day when attending church gave you status is long past. Instead "Look at me, folks, as I look at you. We are sinners, but we are participants in the body and blood of Jesus Christ. We get to see what prophets and kings wanted to see but could not. We are part of the New Creation. Our bodies are on the line. We are committed."

A congregation is a gathering of people who bear one another's burdens. They are people who can support one another in illness and weakness, encourage one another when a task is heavy, speak a word of serious concern when they detect a lapse, and rejoice together in victories. Bodily presence at the Lord's Supper is not to be shunned

but celebrated. Jesus Christ is here in a bodily presence with the bread. Why should you lower your eyes? Jesus Christ is here also as a bodily presence in you and your fellow members, who are to be Christs to each other. You should not lower your eyes. Look up.

And as you look up, you see that the last communicants are leaving the Table. One or another of these reflections took control of your mind. You have to scoop up a hymnal, a worship folder, and some leftover thoughts, since the service will come rather abruptly to its end.

5. "In the Morning . . ."

The Communion being ended, and your reflections too, the ministers clear the table and replace the cup and plate while you join in singing the CANTICLE, a short hymn of thanks. The minister offers a PRAYER, pronounces a BLESSING on you and all the people, and says, "Go in peace. Serve the Lord." (This used to be: "*Ita missa est*"—"the mass is ended; go in peace." Hence the term *mass*.) So you go in peace. You glance at your watch, wondering whether the service was over-long, given the rather large communing congregation today. A secular thought crowds in. Has the roast burned? I've got to catch Harry and Marge to see about our get-together on Friday. Will that weak battery start the motor? Such thoughts were not completely out of mind during the service. They are with you yet. But God is present among people whose minds wander, whose attentions stray, whose staying-power is short. He is present in a sanctuary that never quite leaves behind its world. God is also present in a world that should become a sanctuary. His peace goes with you into that world.

You greet the ministers at the door, as you did back when they passed the peace of Christ, you chat with some friends, the car does start, the roast is only slightly burned, and most of the day is still ahead of you. By evening you will have passed through some of the usual cycles of boredom, drift, anger, and frustration. You hollered at the children. You grumbled about having to go to work tomorrow. You bet wrong on that choice of an evening

God be with you.
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them up to God.

Let us give thanks to the Almighty God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Blessed are you, O God,
who with your Word and Holy Spirit
created all things and called them good.

And so, with your people on earth
and all the company of heaven,
we praise your name
and join their unending hymn:

Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is the One
who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

Holy are you,
and blessed is your eternal Word,
who became flesh
and came to dwell among us
in Jesus Christ:
whom your Spirit anointed
to preach good news to the poor,
to proclaim release to the captives
and recovering of sight to the blind,
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
and to announce that the time had come
when you would save your people;
who healed the sick, fed the hungry,
and ate with sinners.

On the night before meeting with death,
Jesus took bread,
gave thanks to you,
broke the bread,
gave it to the disciples, and said:
"Take, eat;
this is my body which is given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over
Jesus took the cup,
gave thanks to you,
gave it to the disciples, and said:

"Drink from this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
poured out for you and for many
for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it,
in remembrance of me."

And so, in remembrance
of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
we offer ourselves
in praise and thanksgiving
as a holy and living sacrifice,
in union with Christ's offering for us,
as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us,
gathered here,
and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Make them be for us
the body and blood of Christ,
that in unity we may be for the world
the body of Christ,
redeemed by Christ's blood,
until Christ comes in final victory
and we feast at your table for ever.

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honor and glory is yours,
Almighty God, now and for ever.

Amen.

*The minister breaks the bread in silence,
or while saying:*

Because there is one loaf,
we, who are many, are one body,
for we all partake of the one loaf.
The bread which we break
is a sharing in the body of Christ.

*The minister lifts the cup in silence,
or while saying:*

The cup over which we give thanks
is a sharing in the blood of Christ.

Lift up your heart(s)
and give thanks to God.

Blessed are you, O God,
who with your Word and Holy Spirit
created all things and called them good.
In Jesus Christ your Word became flesh
and came to dwell among us.
Through Jesus' suffering and death
you destroyed the power of sin and death.
You raised from the dead this same Jesus,
who now reigns with you in glory,
and poured upon us your Holy Spirit,
making us
the people of your new covenant.

On the night before meeting with death
Jesus took bread,
gave thanks to you,
broke the bread,
gave it to the disciples, and said:
"Take, eat;
this is my body which is given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me."

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Jesus took the cup,
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"Drink from this, all of you;
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Pour out your Holy Spirit on us
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that in unity we may be for the world
the body of Christ,

redeemed by Christ's blood,
until Christ comes in final victory
and we feast at your table for ever.

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honor and glory is yours,
Almighty God, now and for ever.

Amen.

And now,
with the confidence of children of God,
let us pray:

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory
are yours now and for ever. Amen.

The minister breaks the bread.

*The bread and wine are given to the people,
with these or other words being exchanged:*
The body of Christ, given for you. Amen.
The blood of Christ, given for you. Amen.

*When all have received,
the Lord's table is put in order.*

*The minister may then give thanks
after Communion.*

A hymn or song may be sung.

The minister gives the blessing:
The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit
be with you all. Amen.

COMMUNION SERVICE

In Metropolitan Community Churches everywhere, we practice an open communion. Everyone is welcome at this table, you need only come seeking the presence of Jesus the Christ.

At Covenant we practice communion in two ways. First, the ushers will come among you with the elements and you may receive at your seat; or if you wish, you may come forward and be served at the altar.

God be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to God.

Let us give thanks.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

It is right to glorify you and to give you thanks, for you alone are God, living and true.

Countless throngs of angels stand before you to serve you night and day; and beholding the glory of your presence they offer you unceasing praise. Joining with them and giving voice to every creature under heaven, we acclaim you, and glorify your name, as we sing (say):

Holy, holy, holy God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is the One who comes in the name of our God.

Hosanna in the highest.

God you loved the world so much that in the fullness of time, you sent Jesus to be our Savior. To the poor Jesus proclaimed the good news of salvation; to prisoners freedom; to the sorrowful, joy. He fed the hungry, healed the sick, ate with the

scorned and forgotten, and gave this meal as a pledge of his abiding presence.

At supper he took bread, and after giving thanks, he broke the bread and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you." When the supper was over, he took the cup and gave thanks. He gave the cup to his disciples and said, "Drink from this all of you; this is the cup of the new covenant in my blood, poured out for you and many for the forgiveness of sins." When we eat this bread and drink this cup we experience anew the presence of the Jesus the Christ and look forward to his coming in final victory.

God, we pray that in your goodness and mercy your Holy Spirit may descend upon us and upon these gifts, sanctifying them and showing them to be holy gifts for your holy people, the bread of life and the cup of salvation, the body and blood of Jesus the Christ. Grant that all who share this bread and cup may become one body and one spirit, a living sacrifice in Christ to the praise of your name.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ, all glory and honor are yours Almighty God, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, forever and ever. Amen.

Let us recall the mystery of our faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

(The elements are distributed.)

Let us pray:

God, we give you thanks for these holy mysteries which bring to us here on earth a share of the transformed life to come, through Jesus Christ our Savior. May we go in peace to serve God and our neighbor in all that we do. Amen.

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God be with you.
 And also with you.
 Lift up your hearts.
 We lift them up to God.
 Let us give thanks to the Almighty God.
 It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing,
 always and everywhere
 to give thanks to you,
 Sovereign of the Ages,
 whose strong and loving arms
 embrace the universe,
 for with your eternal Word and Holy Spirit
 you are for ever one God.

You created all things
 and called them good.
 You formed us in your image
 and breathed into us the breath of life.
 When we turned away, and our love failed,
 your love remained steadfast.
 You delivered us from captivity,
 made covenant to be our sovereign God,
 and spoke to us through your prophets.

And so, with your people on earth
 and all the company of heaven,
 we praise your name
 and join their unending hymn:

Holy, holy, holy Lord,
 God of power and might,
 heaven and earth are full of your glory.
 Hosanna in the highest.
 Blessed is the One
 who comes in the name of the Lord.
 Hosanna in the highest.

Holy are you,
 and blessed is your eternal Word,
 who became flesh
 and came to dwell among us
 in Jesus Christ:
 whom your Spirit anointed
 to preach good news to the poor,
 to proclaim release to the captives
 and recovering of sight to the blind,

to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
 and to announce that the time had come
 when you would save your people;
 who healed the sick, fed the hungry,
 and ate with sinners.

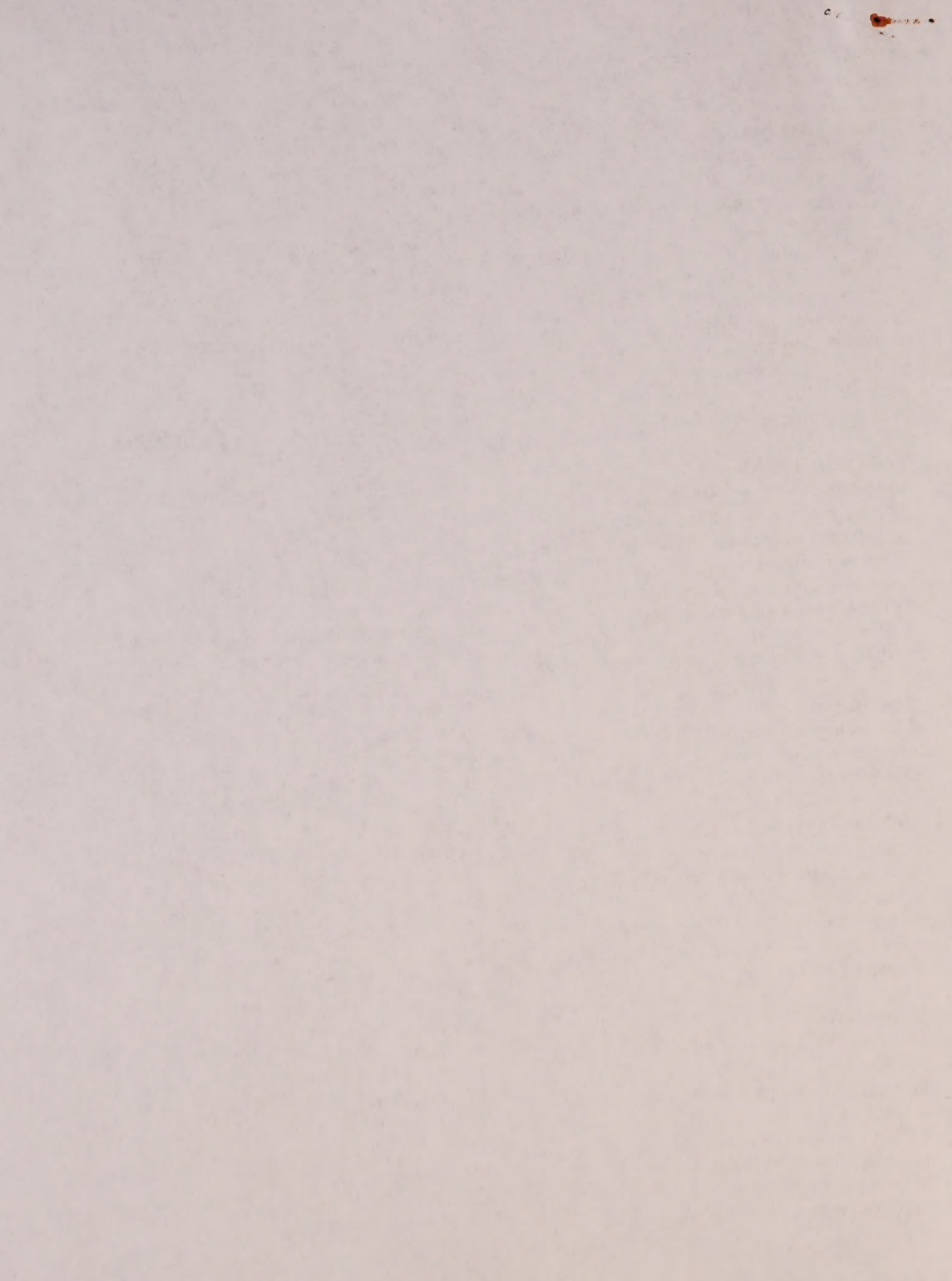
By the baptism of Jesus' suffering,
 death, and resurrection,
 you gave birth to your Church,
 delivered us from slavery to sin and death,
 and made with us a new covenant
 by water and the Spirit.
 Jesus ascended with the promise
 to be with us always,
 in the power of your Word and Holy Spirit.

On the night before meeting with death,
 Jesus took bread,
 gave thanks to you,
 broke the bread,
 gave it to the disciples, and said:
 "Take, eat;
 this is my body which is given for you.
 Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over
 Jesus took the cup,
 gave thanks to you,
 gave it to the disciples, and said:
 "Drink from this, all of you;
 this is my blood of the new covenant,
 poured out for you and for many
 for the forgiveness of sins.
 Do this, as often as you drink it,
 in remembrance of me."

And so, in remembrance
 of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
 we offer ourselves
 in praise and thanksgiving
 as a holy and living sacrifice,
 in union with Christ's offering for us,
 as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died,
 Christ is risen,
 Christ will come again.



Pour out your Holy Spirit on us,
gathered here,
and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Make them be for us
the body and blood of Christ,
that we may be for the world
the body of Christ,
redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ,
one with each other,
and one in ministry to all the world,
until Christ comes in final victory
and we feast at Christ's heavenly banquet.

Through your eternal Word Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church,
all honor and glory is yours,
Almighty God, now and for ever.

Amen.

And now,
with the confidence of children of God,
let us pray:

Our Father in heaven, (*Abba*,)
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come, (*your reign begin*,)
your will be done
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us in the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom (*reign*),
the power, and the glory
are yours now and for ever. Amen.

*The minister breaks the bread in silence,
or while saying:*
Because there is one loaf,
we, who are many, are one body,
for we all partake of the one loaf.
The bread which we break
is a sharing in the body of Christ.

*The minister lifts the cup in silence,
or while saying:*

The cup over which we give thanks
is a sharing in the blood of Christ.

*The bread and wine are given to the people,
with these or other words being exchanged:*
The body of Christ, given for you. Amen.
The blood of Christ, given for you. Amen.

*The congregation sings hymns
while the bread and cup are given.*

*When all have received,
the Lord's table is put in order.*

*The following prayer is then offered
by the minister or by all:*

Eternal God,
we give you thanks for this holy mystery
in which you have given yourself to us.
Grant that we may go into the world
in the strength of your Spirit,
to give ourselves to others,
in Jesus' name. Amen.

A hymn or song may be sung.

The people are dismissed with the blessing:

Go forth in peace.
The grace of Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit
be with you all.

Amen.

For alternative texts following this Great Thanksgiving, turn to page 58.

God be with you.
 And also with you.
 Lift up your hearts.
 We lift them up to God.
 Let us give thanks to the Almighty God.
 It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing,
 always and everywhere
 to give thanks to you, Father Almighty,
 Creator of heaven and earth.

And so, with your people on earth
 and all the company of heaven
 we praise your name
 and join their unending hymn:

Holy, holy, holy
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is the One
who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

Holy are you,
 and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ.
 By the baptism
 of his suffering, death, and resurrection
 you gave birth to your Church,
 delivered us from slavery to sin and death,
 and made with us a new covenant
 by water and the Spirit.

On the night
 in which he gave himself up for us
 he took bread,
 gave thanks to you,
 broke the bread,
 gave it to his disciples, and said:
 "Take, eat;
 this is my body which is given for you.
 Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over
 he took the cup,
 gave thanks to you,
 gave it to his disciples, and said:

"Drink from this, all of you;
 this is my blood of the new covenant,
 poured out for you and for many
 for the forgiveness of sins.
 Do this, as often as you drink it,
 in remembrance of me."

And so, in remembrance
 of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
 we offer ourselves
 in praise and thanksgiving
 as a holy and living sacrifice,
 in union with Christ's offering for us,
 as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us,
 gathered here,
 and on these gifts of bread and wine.
 Make them be for us
 the body and blood of Christ,
 that we may be for the world
 the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ,
 one with each other,
 and one in ministry to all the world,
 until Christ comes in final victory,
 and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ,
 with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church,
 all honor and glory is yours,
 Almighty Father, now and for ever.

Amen.

And now,
 with the confidence of children of God,
 let us pray:

Our Father . . .

Continue on page 13, 15, or 58.

Services 2 and 3 are intended for use in home or
 hospital settings or in other situations where brevity
 is essential.

Lift up your heart(s) and give thanks to the Lord our God.

Father Almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
you made us in your image,
to love and to be loved.
When we turned away, and our love failed,
your love remained steadfast.
By the suffering, death, and resurrection
of your only Son Jesus Christ
you delivered us
from slavery to sin and death
and made with us a new covenant
by water and the Spirit.

On the night
in which he gave himself up for us
he took bread,
gave thanks to you,
broke the bread,
gave it to his disciples, and said:
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Do this in remembrance of me."

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the body and blood of Christ,
that we may be for the world
the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ,
one with each other,
and one in ministry to all the world,
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and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church,
all honor and glory is yours,
Almighty Father, now and for ever.

Amen.

And now,
with the confidence of children of God,
let us pray:

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory
are yours, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The minister breaks the bread.

*The bread and wine are given to the people,
with these or other words being exchanged:*
The body of Christ, given for you. **Amen.**
The blood of Christ, given for you. **Amen.**

*When all have received,
the Lord's table is put in order.*

Thanks may be given after Communion.

A hymn or song may be sung.

The minister gives the blessing:
The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit
be with you all. **Amen.**

the first of the month of May, 1558, she was crowned
at Westminster, and the ceremony was performed by
the Bishop of London, who had been appointed to that
office by the Pope. The ceremony was attended by
a large number of nobles and gentlemen, and the
king was present. The queen was crowned with a
diamond crown, and the ceremony was celebrated
with great pomp and splendour.

After the coronation, the queen went to the Tower of London, and the king followed her. They were both crowned with the same crown, and the ceremony was repeated.

On the 15th of May, 1558, the queen was crowned at Westminster, and the ceremony was performed by the Bishop of London. The ceremony was attended by a large number of nobles and gentlemen, and the king was present. The queen was crowned with a diamond crown, and the ceremony was celebrated with great pomp and splendour.

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An Alternate Lectionary with Psalters

ADVENT: YEAR A (1992, 1995)

1st Sunday	Psa. 122	562*	Isa. 2:1-5	Rom. 13:8-14	Matt. 24:36-44
2nd Sunday	Psa. 72:1-19	597	Isa. 11:1-10	Rom. 15:4-13	Matt. 3:1-12
3rd Sunday	Psa. 146	612	Isa. 35:1-10	James 5:7-10	Matt. 11:2-11
4th Sunday	Psa. 24	561	Isa. 7:10-15	Rom. 1:1-7	Matt. 1:18-25

CHRISTMAS SEASON: YEAR A (1992, 1995)

Christmas	Psa. 96	585	Isa. 9:2-7	Titus 2:11-15	Luke 2:1-14
1st Sunday	Psa. 111	590	Ecc. 3:1-9, 14-17	Col. 3:12-21	Matt. 2:13-15, 19-23
2nd Sunday	Psa. 147:12-20	580	Isa. 61:10-62:3*	Eph. 1:3-6, 15-18	John 1:1-18

EPIPHANY SEASON: YEAR A (1993, 1996)

Epiphany	Psa. 72:1-19	577	Isa. 60:1-6	Eph. 3:1-12	Matt. 2:1-12
1st Sunday	Psa. 29:1-4, 9-10	583	Isa. 42:1-7	Acts 10:34-38	Matt. 3:13-17
2nd Sunday	Psa. 40:1-11	568	Isa. 49:1-7	I Cor. 1:1-9	John 1:29-34
3rd Sunday	Psa. 27:1-4, 13-14	563	Isa. 9:1-4	I Cor. 1:10-17	Matt. 4:12-23
4th Sunday	Psa. 1	554	Zeph. 2:3, 3:11-13	I Cor. 1:26-31	Matt. 5:1-12
5th Sunday	Psa. 112:4-9	599	Isa. 58:5-12	I Cor. 2:1-5	Matt. 5:13-16
6th Sunday	Psa. 119:1-16	564	Deut. 30:15-20*	I Cor. 2:6-13	Matt. 5:17-37
7th Sunday	Psa. 103:1-13	587	Lev. 19:1-2, 15-18	I Cor. 3:10-11, 16-23	Matt. 5:38-48
8th Sunday	Psa. 62	573	Isa. 49:8-18	I Cor. 4:1-5	Matt. 6:24-34
Last Sunday	Psa. 2:6-11	584	Exod. 24:12, 15-18	I Cor. 12:31-13:13	Matt. 17:1-19

LENT: YEAR A (1993, 1996)

Ash Wednesday	Psa. 51:1-17	571	Joel 2:12-19	II Cor. 5:20-6:18	Matt. 6:1-6, 16-21
1st Sunday	Psa. 130	581	Gen. 2:7-9, 15-17; 3:1-7a	Rom. 5:12-19	Matt. 4:1-11
2nd Sunday	Psa. 33:12-22	569	Gen. 12:1-8	Rom. 4:1-5, 13-17	John 4:5-26
3rd Sunday	Psa. 95:1-2, 6-11	558	Exod. 17:3-7	Rom. 8:1-5	John 4:27-42
4th Sunday	Psa. 23	598	I Sam. 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a	Eph. 5:8-14	John 9:1-41
5th Sunday	Psa. 116:1-9	615	Ezek. 37:1-3, 11-14	Rom. 8:6-11	John 11:1-45
Palm Sunday	Psa. 22:1-11	559	Isa. 50:4-9a	Phil. 2:5-11	Matt. 26:14-27:66

LENT: YEAR A (cont'd.)

Monday	Psa. 36:5-10	572	Isa. 42:1-9	Heb. 9:11-15	John 12:1-11
Tuesday	Psa. 71:1-12, 15, 17	567	Isa. 49:1-8a	I Cor. 1:18-31	John 12:37-50
Wednesday	Psa. 70:1-2, 4, 5	578	Isa. 50:4-9	Rom. 5:6-11	Matt. 26:14-25
Thursday	Psa. 116:12-19	591	Exod. 12:1-14	I Cor. 11:23-26	John 13:1-19
Good Friday	Psa. 22:1-18	559	Isa. 52:13-53:12	Heb. 4:14-16; 5:7-9	John 18:1-19:42

SEASON OF EASTER: YEAR A (1993, 1996)

Easter Eve	Gen. 1:1-2, 2, 2, 2	Pa. 33:1-11	Gen. 22:1-18	Pa. 33:12-22	
	Exod. 14:15-15:1	Exod. 15:1-6, 17-18	Isa. 54:5-14		
	Pa. 30:2-6, 11-13	Isa. 55:1-11	Isa. 12:2-6	Ezek. 36:16-28	
	Pa. 42:1-7, 43-34	Zeph. 3:14-17, 19-20	Pa. 98	Rom. 6:3-11	
Easter Day	Psa. 114	Matt. 28:1-10	Col. 3:1-11	John 20:1-9	
	Psa. 118:1-2, 14-24	582	Acts 10:34-43		
2nd Sunday	Psa. 105:1-7	605	Acts 2:42-47	I Pet. 1:3-9	John 20:19-31
3rd Sunday	Psa. 16	600	Acts 2:22-32	I Pet. 1:17-23	Luke 24:13-35
4th Sunday	Psa. 23	560	Acts 2:14a, 36-41	I Pet. 2:19-25	John 10:1-10
5th Sunday	Psa. 33:1-11	565	Acts 6:1-7, 14-17	I Pet. 2:1-10	John 14:1-14
6th Sunday	Psa. 66:1-7, 16-20	576	Acts 8:4-8, 14-17	I Pet. 3:8-18	John 14:15-21
Ascension	Psa. 110	561	Acts 1:1-11	Eph. 1:16-23	Matt. 28:16-20
7th Sunday	Psa. 47	561	Acts 1:12-14	I Pet. 4:12-19	John 17:1-11
Pentecost	Psa. 104:1-4, 24-33	583	Acts 2:1-21	I Cor. 12:4-13	John 20:19-23

SEASON AFTER PENTECOST: YEAR A (1993, 1996)

1st Sunday	Psa. 150	555	Exod. 34:4-6, 8-9	II Cor. 13:5-13	Matt. 28:16-20
2nd Sunday	Psa. 31:1-5, 19-24	606	Deut. 11:18-21, 26-28	Rom. 3:21-28	Matt. 7:21-29
3rd Sunday	Psa. 50:1-15	570	Hos. 6:1-6	Rom. 4:18-25	Matt. 9:9-13
4th Sunday	Psa. 100	611	Exod. 19:2-6a	Rom. 5:6-11	Matt. 9:35-10:8
5th Sunday	Psa. 69:1-18, 34-36	574	Jer. 20:7-13	Rom. 5:12-15	Matt. 10:26-33
6th Sunday	Psa. 89:1-4, 15-18	557	II Kings 4:8-16	Rom. 6:1-11	Matt. 10:34-42
7th Sunday	Psa. 145	602	Zech. 9:9-13	Rom. 7:21-8:6	Matt. 11:25-30
8th Sunday	Psa. 65	575	Isa. 55:10-13	Rom. 8:18-25	Matt. 13:1-23
9th Sunday	Psa. 86:1-17	556	II Sam. 7:18-22 ¹⁰	Rom. 8:26-27	Matt. 13:24-43
10th Sunday	Psa. 119:129-36	594	I Kings 3:5-12	Rom. 8:28-30	Matt. 13:44-52
11th Sunday	Psa. 78:14-20, 23-29	572	Neh. 9:16-20	Rom. 8:35-39	Matt. 14:13-21

SEASON AFTER PENTECOST: YEAR A (cont'd.)

12th Sunday	Ps. 85:8-13	566	I Kings 19:9-18	Rom. 9:1-5	Matt. 14:22-33
13th Sunday	Ps. 67	567	Isa. 56:1, 6-8	Rom. 11:13-16	Matt. 15:21-28
14th Sunday	Ps. 138	578	Isa. 22:15-16, 19-23	Rom. 11:33-36	Matt. 16:13-20
15th Sunday	Ps. 26	586	Jer. 15:15-21	Rom. 12:1-8	Matt. 16:21-28
16th Sunday	Ps. 119:33-40	604	Ezek. 33:7-11	Rom. 12:9-18	Matt. 18:15-20
17th Sunday	Ps. 103:1-13	588	Gen. 4:13-16 ¹¹	Rom. 14:5-9	Matt. 18:21-35
18th Sunday	Ps. 27:1-9	601	Isa. 55:6-11	Phil. 1:21-27	Matt. 20:1-16
19th Sunday	Ps. 25:1-10	603	Ezek. 18:25-32	Phil. 2:1-11	Matt. 21:28-32
20th Sunday	Ps. 80:7-15, 18-19	607	Isa. 5:1-7	Phil. 4:4-9	Matt. 21:33-43
21st Sunday	Ps. 23	579	Isa. 25:6-10 ¹²	Phil. 4:12-20	Matt. 22:1-14
22nd Sunday	Ps. 96	585	Isa. 45:1-7	I Thess. 1:1-5	Matt. 22:15-22
23rd Sunday	Ps. 18:1-3, 46	596	Exod. 12:21-27	I Thess. 1:2-10	Matt. 22:34-46
24th Sunday	Ps. 131	593	Mal. 1:14b-2, 2b, 8-10	I Thess. 2:7-13	Matt. 23:1-12
25th Sunday	Ps. 63:1-7	589	Song of Sol. 3:1-5 ¹³	I Thess. 3:7-13	Matt. 24:1-14
26th Sunday	Ps. 128	613	Prov. 31:10-12, 18	I Thess. 4:13-18	Matt. 25:1-13
27th Sunday	Ps. 105:1-7	564	Jer. 26:1-6	I Thess. 5:1-10	Matt. 25:14-15, 19-30
Last Sunday All Saints'	Ps. 95:1-7	582	Ezek. 34:11-17	I Cor. 15:20-28	Matt. 25:31-46
	Ps. 24:1-6	566	Isa. 26:1-4, 8-9, 12-13, 19-21	Rev. 7:9-17	Matt. 5:1-12

ADVENT: YEAR B (1993, 1996)

1st Sunday	Ps. 80:1-7	562	Isa. 63:16-64:8	I Cor. 1:3-9	Mark 13:32-37
2nd Sunday	Ps. 85	597	Isa. 40:1-11	II Pet. 3:8-14	Mark 1:1-8
3rd Sunday	Luke 1:46-55	612	Isa. 61:1-4, 8-11	I Thess. 5:16-24	John 1:6-8, 19-28
4th Sunday	Ps. 89:1-4, 14-18	561	II Sam. 7:1-5, 7-16	Rom. 16:25-27	Luke 1:26-38

CHRISTMAS SEASON: YEAR B (1993, 1996)

Christmas	Ps. 98	585	Isa. 62:6-12	Titus 3:4-7	Luke 2:15-20
1st Sunday	Ps. 111	590	Jer. 31:10-13 ¹⁴	Heb. 2:10-18	Luke 2:22-40
2nd Sunday	Ps. 147:12-20	580	Rev. 21:22-22:2	Rev. 21:22-22:2	John 1:1-18

EPIPHANY SEASON: YEAR B (1993, 1996)

Epiphany	Ps. 72:1-19	577	Isa. 60:1-6	Eph. 3:1-12	Matt. 2:1-12
1st Sunday	Ps. 29:1-4, 9-10	583	Isa. 42:1-7	Acts 10:34-38	Mark 1:4-11

EPIPHANY SEASON: YEAR B (cont'd.)

1st Sunday	Ps. 67	568	I Sam. 3:1-10	I Cor. 6:12-20	John 1:35-42
2nd Sunday	Ps. 62:5-12	563	Jon. 3:1-5, 10	I Cor. 7:29-31	Mark 1:14-20
3rd Sunday	Ps. 1	554	Deut. 18:15-22	I Cor. 7:32-35	Mark 1:21-28
4th Sunday	Ps. 147:1-12	559	Job 7:1-7	I Cor. 9:16-23	Mark 1:29-39
5th Sunday	Ps. 32	564	Lev. 13:1-2, 44-46	I Cor. 10:31-11:1	Mark 1:40-45
6th Sunday	Ps. 41	587	Isa. 43:15-25	II Cor. 1:18-22	Mark 2:1-12
7th Sunday	Ps. 103:1-13	573	Hos. 2:14-23	II Cor. 3:1b-6	Mark 2:18-22
8th Sunday	Ps. 50:1-6	584	II Kings 2:1-12a	II Cor. 4:3-6	Mark 9:2-9

LENT: YEAR B (1993, 1996)

Ash Wednesday	Ps. 51:1-17	571	Joel 2:12-19	James 1:12-18	Mark 2:15-20
1st Sunday	Ps. 25:3-9	581	Gen. 9:8-15	I Pet. 3:18-22	Mark 1:12-15
2nd Sunday	Ps. 115:1, 9-18	569	Gen. 28:10-17	Rom. 8:31-34	Mark 10:32-45
3rd Sunday	Ps. 19:7-14	558	Exod. 20:1-17	I Rom. 1:22-25	John 2:13-22
4th Sunday	Ps. 137:1-6	598	II Chron. 36:14-21	Eph. 2:1-10	John 3:14-21
5th Sunday	Ps. 51:10-16	615	Jer. 31:31-34	Heb. 5:7-10	John 12:20-33
Palm Sunday	Ps. 22:7-8, 16-19, 22-23	559	Zech. 9:9-12	Phil. 2:5-11	Mark 14:1-15:47
Monday	Ps. 36:5-10	572	Isa. 42:1-9	Heb. 9:11-15	John 12:1-11
Tuesday	Ps. 71:1-12, 15, 17	567	Isa. 49:1-9a	I Cor. 1:18-31	John 12:37-50
Wednesday	Ps. 70:1-2, 4-5	578	Isa. 50:4-9	Rom. 5:6-11	Matt. 26:14-25
Thursday	Ps. 116:12-19	591	Deut. 16:1-8	I Cor. 10:16-21	Mark 14:12-26
Good Friday	Ps. 31:1-5, 9-16	559	Lam. 1:7-12	Heb. 10:14-18	Luke 23:33-46

SEASON OF EASTER: YEAR B (1993, 1996)

Easter Eve	Same as Year A except for the final lesson				Mark 16:1-8
Easter Day	Ps. 118:1-2, 14-24	592	Isa. 25:6-9	I Pet. 1:3-9	Mark 16:1-8
1st Sunday	Ps. 148	605	Acts 4:32-37	I John 5:1-6	John 20:19-31
2nd Sunday	Ps. 139:1-12	600	Acts 3:13-15, 17-19	I John 2:1-6	Luke 24:35-49
3rd Sunday	Ps. 23	560	Acts 4:5-12	I John 3:1-8	John 10:11-18
4th Sunday	Ps. 22:25-31	565	Acts 9:26-31	I John 3:18-24	John 15:1-8
5th Sunday	Ps. 98	576	Acts 11:5a, 11-18	I John 4:1-11	John 15:9-17
6th Sunday	Ps. 110	561	Acts 1:1-11	Eph. 1:16-23	Mark 16:15-20
Ascension	Ps. 47	561	Acts 1:15-26	I John 4:11-16	John 17:11-19
7th Sunday	Ps. 104:1-4, 24-33	583	Joel 2:28-32	Acts 2:1-21	John 16:5-15

SEASON AFTER PENTECOST: YEAR B (1993, 1994, 1995)

1st Sunday	Psa. 149	555	Deut. 4:32-34, 39-40	Rom. 8:12-17	Mark 28:16-20
2nd Sunday	Psa. 81:1-10	606	Deut. 5:12-15	III Cor. 4:7-11	Mark 2:23-3:6
3rd Sunday	Psa. 61:1-5, 8	570	Gen. 3:9-15	III Cor. 4:13-5:1	Mark 3:20-35
4th Sunday	Psa. 92	611	Ezek. 17:22-24	III Cor. 5:6-10	Mark 4:26-34
5th Sunday	Psa. 107:1-3, 23-32	574	Job 38:1-11, 16-18	III Cor. 5:14-17	Mark 4:35-41
6th Sunday	Psa. 30	557	Lam. 3:22-33 ¹⁸	III Cor. 8:1-9, 13-15	Mark 5:21-43
7th Sunday	Psa. 123	602	Ezek. 2:1-5	III Cor. 12:7-10	Mark 6:1-6
8th Sunday	Psa. 85:7-13	575	Amos 7:10-15	Eph. 1:3-14	Mark 6:7-13
9th Sunday	Psa. 23	556	Jer. 23:1-6	Eph. 2:13-22	Mark 6:30-44
10th Sunday	Psa. 145	594	II Kings 4:42-44	Eph. 4:1-6, 11-16	John 6:1-15
11th Sunday	Psa. 78:14-20, 23-29	572	Exod. 16:2-15	Eph. 4:17-25	John 6:24-35
12th Sunday	Psa. 34:1-8	566	I Kings 19:4-8	Eph. 4:30-5:2	John 6:41-52
13th Sunday	Psa. 34:9-14	567	Prov. 9:1-6	Eph. 5:15-20	John 6:51-59
14th Sunday	Psa. 34:15-22	578	Josh. 24:1-2a, 14-18	Eph. 5:21-33	John 6:60-69
15th Sunday	Psa. 15	586	Deut. 4:1-8	James 1:17-22, 26-27	Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23
16th Sunday	Psa. 146	604	Isa. 35:4-7a	James 2:1-5	Mark 7:31-37
17th Sunday	Psa. 116:1-9	588	Isa. 50:4-10	James 2:14-18	Mark 8:27-38
18th Sunday	Psa. 54	601	Jer. 11:18-20 ¹⁶	James 3:13-4:3	Mark 9:30-37
19th Sunday	Psa. 135:1-7, 13-14	603	Num. 11:24-30	James 5:1-6	Mark 9:38-50
20th Sunday	Psa. 128	607	Gen. 2:18-24	Heb. 2:9-13	Mark 10:2-16
21st Sunday	Psa. 90:1-8, 12-17	579	Prov. 3:13-20 ¹⁷	Heb. 3:1-6	Mark 10:17-30
22nd Sunday	Psa. 91:9-16	595	Isa. 53:10-12	Heb. 4:12-16	Mark 10:35-45
23rd Sunday	Psa. 126	596	Jer. 31:7-9	Heb. 4:2-10	Mark 10:46-52
24th Sunday	Psa. 119:1-16	593	Deut. 6:1-9	Heb. 7:23-28	Mark 12:28-34
25th Sunday	Psa. 107:1-3, 33-43	589	I Kings 17:8-16	Heb. 9:24-28	Mark 12:38-44
26th Sunday	Psa. 116	613	Dan. 12:1-4	Heb. 10:11-19	Mark 13:14-23
27th Sunday	Psa. 11	564	Dan. 7:9-10	Heb. 10:31-39	Mark 13:24-32
Last Sunday	Psa. 93	582	Dan. 7:13-14	Rev. 1:4b-8	John 18:33-37
All Saints	Psa. 24:1-6	566	Rev. 7:2-4, 9-14	John 3:1-3	Matt. 5:1-12

ADVENT: YEAR C (1991, 1994)

1st Sunday	Psa. 25:1-10	562	Jer. 33:14-16	I Thess. 3:9-4:2	Luke 21:25-36
2nd Sunday	Psa. 126	597	Isa. 9:2, 6-7 ¹⁸	Phil. 1:3-11	Luke 3:1-6
3rd Sunday	Isa. 12:2-6	612	Zeph. 3:14-18a	Phil. 4:4-9	Luke 3:7-18
4th Sunday	Psa. 80:1-7	561	Mic. 5:1-5a	Heb. 10:5-10	Luke 1:39-49

CHRISTMAS SEASON: YEAR C (1991, 1994-1995)

Christmas 1st Sunday	Psa. 97	585	Isa. 52:6-10	Heb. 1:1-9	John 1:1-18
2nd Sunday	Psa. 111	590	Isa. 60:13-21 ¹⁹	Gal. 4:4-7	Luke 2:41-52
	Psa. 147:12-20	580	Job 28:20-28 ²⁰	I Cor. 1:18-25	Luke 2:36-40

EPIPHANY SEASON: YEAR C (1992, 1995)

Epiphany 1st Sunday	Psa. 72:1-19	577	Isa. 60:1-6	Eph. 3:1-12	Matt. 2:1-12
2nd Sunday	Psa. 29:1-4, 9-10	583	Isa. 42:1-7	Acts 10:34-38	Luke 3:15-17, 21-22
3rd Sunday	Psa. 65:1-5	568	Isa. 62:1-5	I Cor. 12:3-11	John 2:1-12
4th Sunday	Psa. 113	563	Neh. 8:1-4a, 5-6, 8-10	I Cor. 12:12-30	Luke 1:1-4, 4:14-21
5th Sunday	Psa. 71:1-6, 15-17	554	Jer. 1:4-10	I Cor. 12:31-13:13	Luke 4:21-30
6th Sunday	Psa. 138	599	Isa. 61:8	I Cor. 15:1-11	Luke 5:1-11
7th Sunday	Psa. 1	564	Jer. 17:5-10	I Cor. 15:12-20	Luke 6:17-26
8th Sunday	Psa. 37:3-10	587	Gen. 45:3-8a, 15	I Cor. 15:35-38a, 42-50	Luke 6:27-38
Last Sunday	Psa. 92	573	Isa. 55:5, 10-13 ²¹	I Cor. 15:50-58	Luke 6:39-45
	Psa. 99:1-5	584	Deut. 34:1-12	II Cor. 3:12-4:2	Luke 9:28-36

LENT: YEAR C (1992, 1995)

Ash Wednesday	Psa. 51:1-17	571	Zech. 7:4-10	I Cor. 9:19-27	Luke 5:29-35
1st Sunday	Psa. 91	581	Deut. 26:5-11	Rom. 10:8-13	Luke 4:1-13
2nd Sunday	Psa. 27:7-18	569	Gen. 15:5-12, 17-18	Phil. 3:17-4:1	Luke 13:31-35
3rd Sunday	Psa. 103:1-11, 19-16	558	Exod. 3:1-8b, 10-15	I Cor. 10:1-13	Luke 13:1-9
4th Sunday	Psa. 34:1-8	598	Josh. 5:9-12	II Cor. 5:16-21	Luke 15:11-32
5th Sunday	Psa. 28:1-3, 6-9	615	Isa. 43:16-21	Phil. 3:8-14	John 8:1-11
Palm Sunday	Psa. 31:1-5, 9-16	559	Deut. 32:36-39	Phil. 2:5-11	Luke 22:14-23:56
Monday	Psa. 36:5-10	572	Isa. 42:1-9	Heb. 9:11-15	John 12:1-11
Tuesday	Psa. 71:1-12, 15, 17	567	Isa. 49:1-9a	I Cor. 1:18-31	John 12:37-50
Wednesday	Psa. 70:1-2, 4-5	578	Isa. 50:4-9	Rom. 5:6-11	Matt. 26:14-25
Thursday	Psa. 116:12-19	591	Num. 9:1-3, 11-12	Heb. 10:16-30	Luke 22:7-20
Good Friday	Psa. 22:1-8, 19-31	559	Hos. 6:1-6	Heb. 9:15-22	Matt. 27:31-50

SEASON OF EASTER: YEAR C (1992, 1995)

Same as Year A except for the final lection		Luke 24:1-12	
Easter Eve	Ps. 118:1-2, 14-24	Luke 24:1-11	Luke 24:1-11
Easter Day	Ps. 118:1-2, 14-24	Luke 24:1-11	Luke 24:1-11
2nd Sunday	Ps. 149	John 20:19-31	John 20:19-31
3rd Sunday	Ps. 30	John 20:19-31	John 20:19-31
4th Sunday	Ps. 100	John 10:22-30	John 10:22-30
5th Sunday	Ps. 145:1-13	John 13:31-35	John 13:31-35
6th Sunday	Ps. 67	John 14:23-29	John 14:23-29
Ascension	Ps. 110	Luke 24:44-53	Luke 24:44-53
7th Sunday	Ps. 47	John 17:20-26	John 17:20-26
Pentecost	Ps. 104:1-4, 24-33	John 15:26-27; 16:4b-11	John 15:26-27; 16:4b-11

SEASON AFTER PENTECOST: YEAR C (1992, 1995)

1st Sunday	Ps. 8	555	Prov. 8:22-31	Rom. 5:1-5	John 3:1-16
2nd Sunday	Ps. 117	606	I Kings 8:38-43	Gal. 1:1-10	Luke 7:1-10
3rd Sunday	Ps. 30	570	I Kings 17:17-24	Gal. 1:11-24	Luke 7:11-17
4th Sunday	Ps. 32	611	III Sam. 12:1-10, 13	Gal. 2:11-21	Luke 7:36-8:3
5th Sunday	Ps. 63:1-8	574	Zech. 12:7-10	Gal. 3:23-29	Luke 9:18-24
6th Sunday	Ps. 16	557	I Kings 19:14-21	Gal. 4:31-5:1, 13-18	Luke 9:51-62
7th Sunday	Ps. 66:1-12, 16-20	602	Isa. 66:10-14c	Gal. 6:11-18	Luke 10:1-12, 17-20
8th Sunday	Ps. 69:30, 32-36	575	Deut. 30:9-14	Col. 1:1-12	Luke 10:25-37
9th Sunday	Ps. 15	556	Gen. 18:1-11	Col. 1:21-28	Luke 10:38-42
10th Sunday	Ps. 138	594	Gen. 18:20-33	Col. 2:6-15	Luke 11:1-13
11th Sunday	Ps. 49:1-12	572	Eccl. 1:2, 2:18, 26	Col. 3:1-11	Luke 12:13-21
12th Sunday	Ps. 33	566	Gen. 15:1-6 ²²	Heb. 11:1-12, 8-19	Luke 12:32-48
13th Sunday	Ps. 82	567	Jer. 38:1b-13	Heb. 12:1-6	Luke 12:49-56
14th Sunday	Ps. 117	578	Isa. 66:18-23	Heb. 12:7-13	Luke 13:22-30
15th Sunday	Ps. 112	586	Prov. 25:6-22 ²³	Heb. 12:18-24	Luke 14:1, 7-14
16th Sunday	Ps. 10:12-14, 16-18	604	Prov. 9:8-12 ²⁴	Philem. 1-20	Luke 14:25-33
17th Sunday	Ps. 51:1-17	588	Exod. 32:7-14	I Tim. 1:12-17	Luke 15:1-10
18th Sunday	Ps. 113	601	Amos 8:4-8	I Tim. 2:1-8	Luke 16:1-13
19th Sunday	Ps. 146	603	Amos 6:1-7	I Tim. 6:11-16	Luke 16:19-31
20th Sunday	Ps. 95:1-7	607	Hab. 1:1-3; 2:1-4	II Tim. 1:3-14	Luke 17:1-10
21st Sunday	Ps. 98:1-4	579	II Kings 5:9-17	II Tim. 2:8-13	Luke 17:11-19

SEASON AFTER PENTECOST: YEAR C (cont'd.)

22nd Sunday	Ps. 121	595	Exod. 17:8-13	II Tim. 3:14-4:5	Luke 18:1-8
23rd Sunday	Ps. 34:1-2, 15-22	596	Deut. 10:12-22 ²⁵	II Tim. 4:6-8, 16-18	Luke 18:9-14
24th Sunday	Ps. 145	593	Zeph. 1:14-16 ²⁶	II Thessa. 1:11-2:2	Luke 18:15-10
25th Sunday	Ps. 148	589	I Chron. 29:10-13 ²⁷	II Thessa. 2:15-3:5	Luke 20:27-38
26th Sunday	Ps. 98:1-3	613	Mal. 3:16-4:2a	II Thessa. 3:6-13	Luke 21:5-19
27th Sunday	Ps. 98:4-9	564	Mal. 3:1-5; 4:5-6	I Pet. 5:6-11	Luke 17:22-23
Last Sunday	Ps. 46	582	Job 23:1-7	Col. 1:12-20	Luke 23:35-43
All Saints	Ps. 149	566	Isa. 26:1-4, 8-9, 12-13, 19-21	Rev. 21:9-11, 22-27	John 11:32-44

SPECIAL DAYS

New Year's Day or Watch Night	580	Eccl. 11:6-9; 12:13	Rev. 21:1-6a	Luke 9:57-62
Human Relations Day	573	Gen. 1:1-3, 26-31	Acts 10:9-15, 34	Mark 3:31-35
Festival of the Christian Home	588	Prov. 31:10-31	Eph. 5:25-6:4	Matt. 19:1-5, 10-14
Heritage Sunday	566	Isa. 52:1-2, 7-12	Rom. 5:1-11	Mark 12:28-34a
Independence Day	595	Deut. 1:5, 8-18	Gal. 5:13-15	John 8:31-36
Labor Day	555	Amos 5:11-15	Col. 3:23-25	John 8:5-14, 26-27
World Order Sunday	596	Mic. 4:1-5	James 4:1-12	Matt. 5:43-48
Reformation Day	570	Neh. 8:1-3, 5-8	Gal. 3:23-26	John 2:13-16
Drug and Alcohol Concerns Sunday	554	Isa. 5:11-12, 20-24	I Cor. 3:16-17	Luke 21:23-26
National Bible Sunday	593	Deut. 30:8-20	Rom. 15:4-13	Luke 4:16-21
Thanksgiving Day	575	Deut. 8:7-18	II Cor. 9:6-12	Luke 12:16-31

184 Kydonia
1 Chron. 29:10-18
Rev. 1-7, 6-8
Matt. 25:31-40

1374
1 Chron 29:10-18
Matt 20:20-28
Eph 6:10-20

God be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to God.

Let us give thanks to the Almighty God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing,
always and everywhere
to give thanks to you,
Sovereign of the Ages,
whose strong and loving arms
embrace the universe,
for with your eternal Word and Holy Spirit
you are for ever one God.

You created all things
and called them good.
You formed us in your image
and breathed into us the breath of life.
When we turned away, and our love failed,
your love remained steadfast.
You delivered us from captivity,
made covenant to be our sovereign God,
and spoke to us through your prophets.

And so, with your people on earth
and all the company of heaven,
we praise your name
and join their unending hymn:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is the One
who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Holy are you,
and blessed is your eternal Word,
who became flesh
and came to dwell among us
in Jesus Christ:
whom your Spirit anointed
to preach good news to the poor,
to proclaim release to the captives
and recovering of sight to the blind,

to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
and to announce that the time had come
when you would save your people;
who healed the sick, fed the hungry,
and ate with sinners.

By the baptism of Jesus' suffering,
death, and resurrection,
you gave birth to your Church,
delivered us from slavery to sin and death,
and made with us a new covenant
by water and the Spirit.
Jesus ascended with the promise
to be with us always,
in the power of your Word and Holy Spirit.

On the night before meeting with death,
Jesus took bread,
gave thanks to you,
broke the bread,
gave it to the disciples, and said:
"Take, eat;
this is my body which is given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over
Jesus took the cup,
gave thanks to you,
gave it to the disciples, and said:
"Drink from this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
poured out for you and for many
for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it,
in remembrance of me."

And so, in remembrance
of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
we offer ourselves
in praise and thanksgiving
as a holy and living sacrifice,
in union with Christ's offering for us,
as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

**Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.**

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us,
gathered here,
and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Make them be for us
the body and blood of Christ,
that we may be for the world
the body of Christ,
redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ,
one with each other,
and one in ministry to all the world,
until Christ comes in final victory
and we feast at Christ's heavenly banquet.

Through your eternal Word Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church,
all honor and glory is yours,
Almighty God, now and for ever.

Amen.

And now,
with the confidence of children of God,
let us pray:

Our Father in heaven, (*Abba*,)
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come, (*your reign begin*,)
your will be done
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us in the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom (*reign*),
the power, and the glory
are yours now and for ever. **Amen.**

*The minister breaks the bread in silence,
or while saying:*
Because there is one loaf,
we, who are many, are one body,
for we all partake of the one loaf.
The bread which we break
is a sharing in the body of Christ.

*The minister lifts the cup in silence,
or while saying:*

The cup over which we give thanks
is a sharing in the blood of Christ.

*The bread and wine are given to the people,
with these or other words being exchanged:*
The body of Christ, given for you. **Amen.**
The blood of Christ, given for you. **Amen.**

*The congregation sings hymns
while the bread and cup are given.*

*When all have received,
the Lord's table is put in order.*

*The following prayer is then offered
by the minister or by all:*

Eternal God,
we give you thanks for this holy mystery
in which you have given yourself to us.
Grant that we may go into the world
in the strength of your Spirit,
to give ourselves to others,
in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

A hymn or song may be sung.

The people are dismissed with the blessing:
Go forth in peace.
The grace of Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit
be with you all.

Amen.

For alternative texts following this Great Thanksgiving,
turn to page 58.

God be with you.
 And also with you.
 Lift up your hearts.
We lift them up to God.
 Let us give thanks to the Almighty God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing,
 always and everywhere
 to give thanks to you, Father Almighty,
 Creator of heaven and earth.

And so, with your people on earth
 and all the company of heaven
 we praise your name
 and join their unending hymn:

Holy, holy, holy
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is the One
who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

Holy are you,
 and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ.
 By the baptism
 of his suffering, death, and resurrection
 you gave birth to your Church,
 delivered us from slavery to sin and death,
 and made with us a new covenant
 by water and the Spirit.

On the night
 in which he gave himself up for us
 he took bread,
 gave thanks to you,
 broke the bread,
 gave it to his disciples, and said:
 "Take, eat;
 this is my body which is given for you.
 Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over
 he took the cup,
 gave thanks to you,
 gave it to his disciples, and said:

"Drink from this, all of you;
 this is my blood of the new covenant,
 poured out for you and for many
 for the forgiveness of sins.
 Do this, as often as you drink it,
 in remembrance of me."

And so, in remembrance
 of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
 we offer ourselves
 in praise and thanksgiving
 as a holy and living sacrifice,
 in union with Christ's offering for us,
 as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us,
 gathered here,
 and on these gifts of bread and wine.
 Make them be for us
 the body and blood of Christ,
 that we may be for the world
 the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ,
 one with each other,
 and one in ministry to all the world,
 until Christ comes in final victory,
 and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ,
 with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church,
 all honor and glory is yours,
 Almighty Father, now and for ever.

Amen.

And now,
 with the confidence of children of God,
 let us pray:

Our Father . . .

Continue on page 13, 15, or 58.

Services 2 and 3 are intended for use in home or
 hospital settings or in other situations where brevity
 is essential.

SERVICE 3: BRIEF TEXT WITHOUT RESPONSES I 15

Lift up your heart(s)
and give thanks to the Lord our God.

Father Almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
you made us in your image,
to love and to be loved.
When we turned away, and our love failed,
your love remained steadfast.
By the suffering, death, and resurrection
of your only Son Jesus Christ
you delivered us
from slavery to sin and death
and made with us a new covenant
by water and the Spirit.

On the night
in which he gave himself up for us
he took bread,
gave thanks to you,
broke the bread,
gave it to his disciples, and said:
"Take, eat;
this is my body which is given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over
he took the cup,
gave thanks to you,
gave it to his disciples, and said:
"Drink from this, all of you;
for this is my blood of the new covenant,
poured out for you and for many
for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it,
in remembrance of me."

And so, in remembrance
of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
we offer ourselves
in praise and thanksgiving
as a holy and living sacrifice,
in union with Christ's offering for us.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us
and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Make them be for us
the body and blood of Christ,
that we may be for the world
the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ,
one with each other,
and one in ministry to all the world,
until Christ comes in final victory,
and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church,
all honor and glory is yours,
Almighty Father, now and for ever.

Amen.

And now,
with the confidence of children of God,
let us pray:

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory
are yours, now and for ever. Amen.

The minister breaks the bread.

*The bread and wine are given to the people,
with these or other words being exchanged:*
The body of Christ, given for you. Amen.
The blood of Christ, given for you. Amen.

*When all have received,
the Lord's table is put in order.*

Thanks may be given after Communion.

A hymn or song may be sung.

The minister gives the blessing:
The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit
be with you all. Amen.

An Alternate Lectionary with Psalter^s

ADVENT: YEAR A (1992, 1995)

1st Sunday	Ps. 122	562*	Isa. 2:1-5	Rom. 13:8-14	Matt. 24:36-44
2nd Sunday	Ps. 72:1-19	597	Isa. 11:1-10	Rom. 15:4-13	Matt. 3:1-12
3rd Sunday	Ps. 146	612	Isa. 35:1-10	James 5:7-10	Matt. 11:2-11
4th Sunday	Ps. 24	561	Isa. 7:10-15	Rom. 1:1-7	Matt. 1:18-25

CHRISTMAS SEASON: YEAR A (1992, 1995)

Christmas	Ps. 96	585	Isa. 9:2-7	Titus 2:11-15	Luke 2:1-14
1st Sunday	Ps. 111	590	Eccl. 3:1-9, 14-17	Col. 3:12-21	Matt. 2:13-15, 19-23
2nd Sunday	Ps. 147:12-20	580	Isa. 61:10-62:3*	Eph. 1:3-6, 15-18	John 1:1-18

EPIPHANY SEASON: YEAR A (1993, 1996)

Epiphany	Ps. 72:1-19	577	Isa. 60:1-6	Eph. 3:1-12	Matt. 2:1-12
1st Sunday	Ps. 29:1-4, 9-10	583	Isa. 42:1-7	Acts 10:34-38	Matt. 3:13-17
2nd Sunday	Ps. 40:1-11	568	Isa. 49:1-7	I Cor. 1:1-9	John 1:29-34
3rd Sunday	Ps. 27:1,4, 13-14	563	Isa. 9:1-4	I Cor. 1:10-17	Matt. 4:12-23
4th Sunday	Ps. 1	554	Zeph. 2:3, 3:11-13	I Cor. 1:26-31	Matt. 5:1-12
5th Sunday	Ps. 112:4-9	599	Isa. 58:5-12	I Cor. 2:1-5	Matt. 5:13-16
6th Sunday	Ps. 119:1-16	564	Deut. 30:15-20*	I Cor. 2:6-13	Matt. 5:17-37
7th Sunday	Ps. 103:1-13	587	Lev. 19:1-2, 15-18	I Cor. 3:10-11, 16-23	Matt. 5:38-48
8th Sunday	Ps. 62	573	Isa. 49:8-18	I Cor. 4:1-5	Matt. 6:24-34
Last Sunday	Ps. 2:6-11	584	Exod. 24:12, 15-18	I Cor. 12:31-13:13	Matt. 17:1-9

LENT: YEAR A (1993, 1996)

Ash	Ps. 51:1-17	571	Joel 2:12-19	II Cor. 5:20b-6:16	Matt. 6:1-6, 16-21
Wednesday					
1st Sunday	Ps. 130	581	Gen. 2:7-9, 15-17; 3:1-7a	Rom. 5:12-19	Matt. 4:1-11
2nd Sunday	Ps. 33:12-22	569	Gen. 12:1-8	Rom. 4:1-5, 13-17	John 4:5-26
3rd Sunday	Ps. 95:1-2, 6-11	558	Exod. 17:3-7	Rom. 8:1-5	John 4:27-42
4th Sunday	Ps. 23	598	I Sam. 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a	Eph. 5:8-14	John 9:1-41
5th Sunday	Ps. 116:1-9	615	Ezek. 37:1-3, 11-14	Rom. 8:6-11	John 11:1-45
Palm Sunday	Ps. 22:1-11	559	Isa. 50:4-9a	Phil. 2:5-11	Matt. 26:14-27:66

LENT: YEAR A (cont'd.)

Monday	Ps. 36:5-10	572	Isa. 42:1-9	Heb. 9:11-15	John 12:1-11
Tuesday	Ps. 71:1-12, 15,17	567	Isa. 49:1-9a	I Cor. 1:18-31	John 12:37-50
Wednesday	Ps. 70:1-2, 4-5	578	Isa. 50:4-9	Rom. 5:6-11	Matt. 26:14-25
Thursday	Ps. 116:12-19	591	Exod. 12:1-14	I Cor. 11:23-26	John 13:1-15
Good Friday	Ps. 22:1-18	559	Isa. 52:13-53:12	Heb. 4:14-16; 5:7-9	John 18:1-19:42

SEASON OF EASTER: YEAR A (1993, 1996)

Easter Eve	Gen. 1:1-2:2	Ps. 33:1-11	Gen. 22:1-18	Ps. 33:12-22	
	Exod. 14:15-15:1	Exod. 15:1-6, 17-18	Isa. 54:5-14		
	Ps. 30:2-6, 11-13	Isa. 55:1-11	Isa. 12:2-6	Ezek. 36:16-28	
	Ps. 42:1-7; 43:3-4	Zeph. 3:14-17, 19-20	Ps. 98	Rom. 6:3-11	
	Ps. 114	Matt. 28:1-10			
Easter Day	Ps. 118:1-2, 14-24	592	Acts 10:34-43	Col. 3:1-11	John 20:1-9
2nd Sunday	Ps. 105:1-7	605	Acts 2:42-47	I Pet. 1:3-9	John 20:19-31
3rd Sunday	Ps. 16	600	Acts 2:22-32	I Pet. 1:17-23	Luke 24:13-35
4th Sunday	Ps. 23	560	Acts 2:14a, 36-41	I Pet. 2:19-25	John 10:1-10
5th Sunday	Ps. 33:1-11	565	Acts 6:1-7	I Pet. 2:1-10	John 14:1-14
6th Sunday	Ps. 66:1-7, 16-20	576	Acts 8:4-8, 14-17	I Pet. 3:8-18	John 14:15-21
Ascension	Ps. 110	561	Acts 1:1-11	Eph. 1:16-23	Matt. 28:16-20
7th Sunday	Ps. 47	561	Acts 1:12-14	I Pet. 4:12-19	John 17:1-11
Pentecost	Ps. 104:1-4, 24-33	583	Acts 2:1-21	I Cor. 12:4-13	John 20:19-23

SEASON AFTER PENTECOST: YEAR A (1993, 1996)

1st Sunday	Ps. 150	555	Exod. 34:4-6, 8-9	II Cor. 13:5-13	Matt. 28:16-20
2nd Sunday	Ps. 31:1-5, 19-24	606	Deut. 11:18-21, 26-28	Rom. 3:21-28	Matt. 7:21-29
3rd Sunday	Ps. 50:1-15	570	Hos. 6:1-6	Rom. 4:18-25	Matt. 9:9-13
4th Sunday	Ps. 100	611	Exod. 19:2-6a	Rom. 5:6-11	Matt. 9:35-10:8
5th Sunday	Ps. 69:1-18, 34-36	574	Jer. 20:7-13	Rom. 5:12-15	Matt. 10:26-33
6th Sunday	Ps. 89:1-4, 15-18	557	II Kings 4:8-16	Rom. 6:1-11	Matt. 10:34-42
7th Sunday	Ps. 145	602	Zech. 9:9-13	Rom. 7:21-8:6	Matt. 11:25-30
8th Sunday	Ps. 65	575	Isa. 55:10-13	Rom. 8:18-25	Matt. 13:1-23
9th Sunday	Ps. 86:11-17	556	II Sam. 7:18-22 ¹⁰	Rom. 8:26-27	Matt. 13:24-43
10th Sunday	Ps. 119:129-36	594	I Kings 3:5-12	Rom. 8:28-30	Matt. 13:44-52
11th Sunday	Ps. 78:14-20, 23-29	572	Neh. 9:16-20	Rom. 8:35-39	Matt. 14:13-21

SEASON AFTER PENTECOST: YEAR A (cont'd.)

12th Sunday	Ps. 85:8-13	566	I Kings 19:9-18	Rom. 9:1-5	Matt. 14:22-33
13th Sunday	Ps. 67	567	Isa. 56:1, 6-8	Rom. 11:13-16, 29-32	Matt. 15:21-28
14th Sunday	Ps. 138	578	Isa. 22:15-16, 19-23	Rom. 11:33-36	Matt. 16:13-20
15th Sunday	Ps. 26	586	Jer. 15:15-21	Rom. 12:1-8	Matt. 16:21-28
16th Sunday	Ps. 119:33-40	604	Ezek. 33:7-11	Rom. 12:9-18	Matt. 18:15-20
17th Sunday	Ps. 103:1-13	588	Gen. 4:13-16 ¹¹	Rom. 14:5-9	Matt. 18:21-35
18th Sunday	Ps. 27:1-9	601	Isa. 55:8-11	Phil. 1:21-27	Matt. 20:1-16
19th Sunday	Ps. 25:1-10	603	Ezek. 18:25-32	Phil. 2:1-11	Matt. 21:28-32
20th Sunday	Ps. 80:7-15, 18-19	607	Isa. 5:1-7	Phil. 4:4-9	Matt. 21:33-43
21st Sunday	Ps. 23	579	Isa. 25:6-10a	Phil. 4:12-20	Matt. 22:1-14
22nd Sunday	Ps. 96	595	Isa. 45:1-7	I Thess. 1:1-5	Matt. 22:15-22
23rd Sunday	Ps. 18:1-3, 46, 50	596	Exod. 22:21-27	I Thess. 1:2-10	Matt. 22:34-46
24th Sunday	Ps. 131	593	Mal. 1:14b-2:2b, 8-10	I Thess. 2:7-13	Matt. 23:1-12
25th Sunday	Ps. 63:1-7	589	Song of Sol. 3:1-5 ¹²	I Thess. 3:7-13	Matt. 24:1-14
26th Sunday	Ps. 128	613	Prov. 31:10-12, 20, 26-31	I Thess. 4:13-18	Matt. 25:1-13
27th Sunday	Ps. 105:1-7	564	Jer. 26:1-6	I Thess. 5:1-10	Matt. 25:14-15, 19-30
Last Sunday All Saints'	Ps. 95:1-7 Ps. 24:1-6	582 566	Ezek. 34:11-17 Isa. 26:1-4, 8-9, 12-13, 19-21	I Cor. 15:20-28 Rev. 7:9-17	Matt. 25:31-46 Matt. 5:1-12

ADVENT: YEAR B (1993, 1996)

1st Sunday	Ps. 80:1-7	562	Isa. 63:16-64:8	I Cor. 1:3-9	Mark 13:32-37
2nd Sunday	Ps. 85	597	Isa. 40:1-11	II Pet. 3:8-14	Mark 1:1-8
3rd Sunday	Luke 1:46b-55	612	Isa. 61:1-4, 8-11	I Thess. 5:16-24	John 1:6-8, 19-28
4th Sunday	Ps. 89:1-4, 14-18	561	II Sam. 7:1-5, 7-16	Rom. 16:25-27	Luke 1:26-38

CHRISTMAS SEASON: YEAR B (1993, 1996)

Christmas	Ps. 98	585	Isa. 62:6-12	Titus 3:4-7	Luke 2:15-20
1st Sunday	Ps. 111	590	Jer. 31:10-13 ¹³	Heb. 2:10-18	Luke 2:22-40
2nd Sunday	Ps. 147:12-20	580	Isa. 61:10-62:3 ¹⁴	Rev. 21:22-22:2	John 1:1-18

EPIPHANY SEASON: YEAR B (1993, 1996)

Epiphany	Ps. 72:1-19	577	Isa. 60:1-6	Eph. 3:1-12	Matt. 2:1-12
1st Sunday	Ps. 29:1-4, 9-10	583	Isa. 42:1-7	Acts 10:34-38	Mark 1:4-11

EPIPHANY SEASON: YEAR B (cont'd.)

2nd Sunday	Ps. 67	568	I Sam. 3:1-10	I Cor. 6:12-20	John 1:35-42
3rd Sunday	Ps. 62:5-12	563	Jon. 3:1-5, 10	I Cor. 7:29-31	Mark 1:14-20
4th Sunday	Ps. 1	554	Deut. 18:15-22	I Cor. 7:32-35	Mark 1:21-28
5th Sunday	Ps. 147:1-12	599	Job 7:1-7	I Cor. 9:16-23	Mark 1:29-39
6th Sunday	Ps. 32	564	Lev. 13:1-2, 44-46	I Cor. 10:31-11:1	Mark 1:40-45
7th Sunday	Ps. 41	587	Isa. 43:15-25	II Cor. 1:18-22	Mark 2:1-12
8th Sunday	Ps. 103:1-13	573	Hos. 2:14-23	II Cor. 3:1b-6	Mark 2:12-22
Last Sunday	Ps. 50:1-6	584	II Kings 2:1-12a		Mark 9:2-9

LENT: YEAR B (1993, 1996)

Ash	Ps. 51:1-17	571	Joel 2:12-19	James 1:12-18	Mark 2:15-20
Wednesday					
1st Sunday	Ps. 25:3-9	581	Gen. 9:8-15	I Pet. 3:18-22	Mark 1:12-15
2nd Sunday	Ps. 115:1, 9-18	569	Gen. 28:10-17	Rom. 8:31-34	Mark 10:32-45
3rd Sunday	Ps. 19:7-14	558	Exod. 20:1-17	I Cor. 1:22-25	John 2:13-22
4th Sunday	Ps. 137:1-6	598	II Chron. 36:14-21	Eph. 2:1-10	John 3:14-21
5th Sunday	Ps. 51:10-16	615	Jer. 31:31-34	Heb. 5:7-10	John 12:20-33
Palm Sunday	Ps. 22:7-8, 16, 19, 22-23	559	Zech. 9:9-12	Phil. 2:5-11	Mark 14:1-15:47
Monday	Ps. 36:5-10	572	Isa. 42:1-9	Heb. 9:11-15	John 12:1-11
Tuesday	Ps. 71:1-12, 15, 17	567	Isa. 49:1-9a	I Cor. 1:18-31	John 12:37-50
Wednesday	Ps. 70:1-2, 4-5	578	Isa. 50:4-9	Rom. 5:6-11	Matt. 26:14-25
Thursday	Ps. 116:12-19	591	Deut. 16:1-8	I Cor. 10:16-21	Mark 14:12-26
Good Friday	Ps. 31:1-5, 9-16	559	Lam. 1:7-12	Heb. 10:14-18	Luke 23:33-46

SEASON OF EASTER: YEAR B (1993, 1996)

Easter Eve	Same as Year A except for the final lesson				Mark 16:1-8
Easter Day	Ps. 118:1-2, 14-24	592	Isa. 25:6-9	I Pet. 1:3-9	Mark 16:1-8
2nd Sunday	Ps. 148	605	Acts 4:32-37	I John 5:1-6	John 20:19-31
3rd Sunday	Ps. 139:1-12	600	Acts 3:13-15, 17-19	I John 2:1-6	Luke 24:35-49
4th Sunday	Ps. 23	560	Acts 4:5-12	I John 3:1-8	John 10:11-18
5th Sunday	Ps. 22:25-31	565	Acts 9:26-31	I John 3:18-24	John 15:1-8
6th Sunday	Ps. 98	576	Acts 11:5a, 11-18	I John 4:1-11	John 15:9-17
Ascension	Ps. 110	561	Acts 1:1-11	Eph. 1:16-23	Mark 16:15-20
7th Sunday	Ps. 47	561	Acts 1:15-26	I John 4:11-16	John 17:11-19
Pentecost	Ps. 104:1-4, 24-33	583	Joel 2:28-32	Acts 2:1-21	John 16:5-15

SEASON AFTER PENTECOST: YEAR B (1993, 1996)

1st Sunday	Ps. 149	555	Deut. 4:32-34, 39-40	Rom. 8:12-17	Matt. 28:16-20
2nd Sunday	Ps. 81:1-10	606	Deut. 5:12-15	II Cor. 4:7-11	Mark 2:23-3:6
3rd Sunday	Ps. 61:1-5, 8	570	Gen. 3:9-15	II Cor. 4:13-5:1	Mark 3:20-35
4th Sunday	Ps. 92	611	Ezek. 17:22-24	II Cor. 5:6-10	Mark 4:26-34
5th Sunday	Ps. 107:1-3, 23-32	574	Job 38:1-11, 16-18	II Cor. 5:14-17	Mark 4:35-41
6th Sunday	Ps. 30	557	Lam. 3:22-33 ¹⁸	II Cor. 8:1-9, 13-15	Mark 5:21-43
7th Sunday	Ps. 123	602	Ezek. 2:1-5	II Cor. 12:7-10	Mark 6:1-6
8th Sunday	Ps. 85:7-13	575	Amos 7:10-15	Eph. 1:3-14	Mark 6:7-13
9th Sunday	Ps. 23	556	Jer. 23:1-6	Eph. 2:13-22	Mark 6:30-44
10th Sunday	Ps. 145	594	II Kings 4:42-44	Eph. 4:1-6, 11-16	John 6:1-15
11th Sunday	Ps. 78:14-20, 23-29	572	Exod. 16:2-15	Eph. 4:17-25	John 6:24-35
12th Sunday	Ps. 34:1-8	566	I Kings 19:4-8	Eph. 4:30-5:2	John 6:41-52
13th Sunday	Ps. 34:9-14	567	Prov. 9:1-6	Eph. 5:15-20	John 6:51-59
14th Sunday	Ps. 34:15-22	578	Josh. 24:1-2a, 14-18	Eph. 5:21-33	John 6:60-69
15th Sunday	Ps. 15	586	Deut. 4:1-8	James 1:17-22, 26-27	Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23
16th Sunday	Ps. 146	604	Isa. 35:4-7a	James 2:1-5	Mark 7:31-37
17th Sunday	Ps. 116:1-9	588	Isa. 50:4-10	James 2:14-18	Mark 8:27-38
18th Sunday	Ps. 54	601	Jer. 11:18-20 ¹⁶	James 3:13-4:3	Mark 9:30-37
19th Sunday	Ps. 135:1-7, 13-14	603	Num. 11:24-30	James 5:1-6	Mark 9:38-50
20th Sunday	Ps. 128	607	Gen. 2:18-24	Heb. 2:9-13	Mark 10:2-16
21st Sunday	Ps. 90:1-8, 12-17	579	Prov. 3:13-20 ¹⁷	Heb. 3:1-6	Mark 10:17-30
22nd Sunday	Ps. 91:9-16	595	Isa. 53:10-12	Heb. 4:12-16	Mark 10:35-45
23rd Sunday	Ps. 126	596	Jer. 31:7-9	Heb. 4:2-10	Mark 10:46-52
24th Sunday	Ps. 119:1-16	593	Deut. 6:1-9	Heb. 7:23-28	Mark 12:28-34
25th Sunday	Ps. 107:1-3, 33-43	589	I Kings 17:8-16	Heb. 9:24-28	Mark 12:38-44
26th Sunday	Ps. 16	613	Dan. 12:1-4	Heb. 10:11-18	Mark 13:14-23
27th Sunday	Ps. 111	564	Dan. 7:9-10	Heb. 10:31-39	Mark 13:24-32
Last Sunday	Ps. 93	582	Dan. 7:13-14	Rev. 1:4b-8	John 18:33-37
All Saints'	Ps. 24:1-6	566	Rev. 7:2-4, 9-14	John 3:1-3	Matt. 5:1-12

ADVENT: YEAR C (1991, 1994)

1st Sunday	Ps. 25:1-10	562	Jer. 33:14-16	I Thess. 3:9-4:2	Luke 21:25-36
2nd Sunday	Ps. 126	597	Isa. 9:2, 6-7 ¹⁸	Phil. 1:3-11	Luke 3:1-6
3rd Sunday	Isa. 12:2-6	612	Zeph. 3:14-18a	Phil. 4:4-9	Luke 3:7-18
4th Sunday	Ps. 80:1-7	561	Mic. 5:1-5a	Heb. 10:5-10	Luke 1:39-49

CHRISTMAS SEASON: YEAR C (1991, 1994-1995)

Christmas	Ps. 97	585	Isa. 52:6-10	Heb. 1:1-9	John 1:1-18
1st Sunday	Ps. 111	590	Isa. 60:13-21 ¹⁹	Gal. 4:4-7	Luke 2:41-52
2nd Sunday	Ps. 147:12-20	580	Job 28:20-28 ²⁰	I Cor. 1:18-25	Luke 2:36-40

EPIPHANY SEASON: YEAR C (1992, 1995)

Epiphany	Ps. 72:1-19	577	Isa. 60:1-6	Eph. 3:1-12	Matt. 2:1-12
1st Sunday	Ps. 29:1-4, 9-10	583	Isa. 42:1-7	Acts 10:34-38	Luke 3:15-17, 21-22
2nd Sunday	Ps. 36:5-10	568	Isa. 62:1-5	I Cor. 12:3-11	John 2:1-12
3rd Sunday	Ps. 113	563	Neh. 8:1-4a, 5-6, 8-10	I Cor. 12:12-30	Luke 1:1-4; 4:14-21
4th Sunday	Ps. 71:1-6, 15-17	554	Jer. 1:4-10	I Cor. 12:31-13:13	Luke 4:21-30
5th Sunday	Ps. 138	599	Isa. 6:1-8	I Cor. 15:1-11	Luke 5:1-11
6th Sunday	Ps. 1	564	Jer. 17:5-10	I Cor. 15:12-20	Luke 6:17-26
7th Sunday	Ps. 37:3-10	587	Gen. 45:3-8a, 15	I Cor. 15:35-38a, 42-50	Luke 6:27-38
8th Sunday	Ps. 92	573	Isa. 55:5, 10-13 ²¹	I Cor. 15:50-58	Luke 6:39-45
Last Sunday	Ps. 99:1-5	584	Deut. 34:1-12	II Cor. 3:12-4:2	Luke 9:28-36

LENT: YEAR C (1992, 1995)

Ash	Ps. 51:1-17	571	Zech. 7:4-10	I Cor. 9:19-27	Luke 5:29-35
Wednesday	Ps. 91	581	Deut. 26:5-11	Rom. 10:8-13	Luke 4:1-13
1st Sunday	Ps. 27:7-18	569	Gen. 15:5-12, 17-18	Phil. 3:17-4:1	Luke 13:31-35
2nd Sunday	Ps. 103:1-11	558	Exod. 3:1-8b, 10-15	I Cor. 10:1-13	Luke 13:1-9
3rd Sunday	Ps. 34:1-8	598	Josh. 5:9-12	II Cor. 5:16-21	Luke 15:11-32
4th Sunday	Ps. 28:1-3, 6-9	615	Isa. 43:16-21	Phil. 3:8-14	John 8:1-11
5th Sunday	Ps. 31:1-5, 9-16	559	Deut. 32:36-39	Phil. 2:5-11	Luke 22:14-23:56
Palm Sunday	Ps. 36:5-10	572	Isa. 42:1-9	Heb. 9:11-15	John 12:1-11
Monday	Ps. 71:1-12, 15, 17	567	Isa. 49:1-9a	I Cor. 1:18-31	John 12:37-50
Tuesday	Ps. 70:1-2, 4-5	578	Isa. 50:4-9	Rom. 5:6-11	Matt. 26:14-25
Wednesday	Ps. 116:12-19	591	Num. 9:1-3, 11-12	Heb. 10:16-30	Luke 22:7-20
Thursday	Ps. 22:1-8, 19-31	559	Hos. 6:1-6	Heb. 9:15-22	Matt. 27:31-50
Good Friday					

SEASON OF EASTER: YEAR C (1992, 1995)

Easter Eve	Same as Year A except for the final lection			Luke 24:1-12
Easter Day	Ps. 118:1-2, 14-24	592	Exod. 15:1-11	I Cor. 15:1-11
2nd Sunday	Ps. 149	605	Acts 5:12-16	Rev. 1:9-19
3rd Sunday	Ps. 30	600	Acts 5:27-42	Rev. 5:11-14
4th Sunday	Ps. 100	560	Acts 13:14, 43-52	Rev. 7:9-17
5th Sunday	Ps. 145:1-13	565	Acts 14:19-28	Rev. 21:1-5
6th Sunday	Ps. 67	576	Acts 15:1-6, 22-29	Rev. 21:10-14, 22-23
Ascension	Ps. 110	561	Acts 1:1-11	Eph. 1:16-23
7th Sunday	Ps. 47	561	Acts 7:55-60	Rev. 22:12-14, 16-17, 20
Pentecost	Ps. 104:1-4, 24-33	583	Gen. 11:1-9	Acts 2:1-21
				Luke 24:44-53
				John 17:20-26
				John 15:26-27; 16:4b-11

SEASON AFTER PENTECOST: YEAR C (1992, 1995)

1st Sunday	Ps. 8	555	Prov. 8:22-31	Rom. 5:1-5	John 3:1-16
2nd Sunday	Ps. 117	606	I Kings 8:38-43	Gal. 1:1-10	Luke 7:1-10
3rd Sunday	Ps. 30	570	I Kings 17:17-24	Gal. 1:11-24	Luke 7:11-17
4th Sunday	Ps. 32	611	II Sam. 12:1-10, 13	Gal. 2:11-21	Luke 7:36-8:3
5th Sunday	Ps. 63:1-8	574	Zech. 12:7-10	Gal. 3:23-29	Luke 9:18-24
6th Sunday	Ps. 16	557	I Kings 19:14-21	Gal. 4:31-5:1, 13-18	Luke 9:51-62
7th Sunday	Ps. 66:1-12, 16-20	602	Isa. 66:10-14c	Gal. 6:11-18	Luke 10:1-12, 17-20
8th Sunday	Ps. 69:30, 32-36	575	Deut. 30:9-14	Col. 1:1-12	Luke 10:25-37
9th Sunday	Ps. 15	556	Gen. 18:1-11	Col. 1:21-28	Luke 10:38-42
10th Sunday	Ps. 138	594	Gen. 18:20-33	Col. 2:6-15	Luke 11:1-13
11th Sunday	Ps. 49:1-12	572	Eccl. 1:2; 2:18-26	Col. 3:1-11	Luke 12:13-21
12th Sunday	Ps. 33	566	Gen. 15:1-6 ²²	Heb. 11:1-2, 8-19	Luke 12:32-48
13th Sunday	Ps. 82	567	Jer. 38:1b-13	Heb. 12:1-6	Luke 12:49-56
14th Sunday	Ps. 117	578	Isa. 66:18-23	Heb. 12:7-13	Luke 13:22-30
15th Sunday	Ps. 112	586	Prov. 25:6-22 ²³	Heb. 12:18-24	Luke 14:1, 7-14
16th Sunday	Ps. 10:12-14, 16-18	604	Prov. 9:8-12 ²⁴	Philem. 1-20	Luke 14:25-33
17th Sunday	Ps. 51:1-17	588	Exod. 32:7-14	I Tim. 1:12-17	Luke 15:1-10
18th Sunday	Ps. 113	601	Amos 8:4-8	I Tim. 2:1-8	Luke 16:1-13
19th Sunday	Ps. 146	603	Amos 6:1-7	I Tim. 6:11-16	Luke 16:19-31
20th Sunday	Ps. 95:1-7	607	Hab. 1:1-3; 2:1-4	II Tim. 1:3-14	Luke 17:1-10
21st Sunday	Ps. 98:1-4	579	II Kings 5:9-17	II Tim. 2:8-13	Luke 17:11-19

SEASON AFTER PENTECOST: YEAR C (cont'd.)

22nd Sunday	Ps. 121	595	Exod. 17:8-13	II Tim. 3:14-4:5	Luke 18:1-8
23rd Sunday	Ps. 34:1-2, 15-22	596	Deut. 10:12-22 ²⁵	II Tim. 4:6-8, 16-18	Luke 18:9-14
24th Sunday	Ps. 145	593	Zeph. 1:14-16 ²⁶	II Thess. 1:11-2:2	Luke 19:1-10
25th Sunday	Ps. 148	589	I Chron. 29:10-13 ²⁷	II Thess. 2:15-3:5	Luke 20:27-38
26th Sunday	Ps. 98:1-3	613	Mal. 3:16-4:2a	II Thess. 3:6-13	Luke 21:5-19
27th Sunday	Ps. 98:4-9	564	Mal. 3:1-5; 4:5-6	I Pet. 5:6-11	Luke 17:22-23
Last Sunday	Ps. 46	582	Job 23:1-7	Col. 1:12-20	Luke 23:35-43
All Saints	Ps. 149	566	Isa. 26:1-4, 8-9, 12-13, 19-21	Rev. 21:9-11, 22-27	John 11:32-44

SPECIAL DAYS²⁸

New Year's Day or Watch Night	580	643	Eccl. 11:6-9; 12:13	Rev. 21:1-6a	Luke 9:57-62
Human Relations Day	573	633	Gen. 1:1-3, 26-31	Acts 10:9-15, 34	Mark 3:31-35
Festival of the Christian Home	588	658	Prov. 31:10-31	Eph. 5:25-6:4	Matt. 19:1-5, 10-14
Heritage Sunday	566	615	Isa. 52:1-2, 7-12	Rom. 5:1-11	Mark 12:28-34a
Independence Day	595	626	Deut. 1:5, 8-18	Gal. 5:13-15	John 8:31-36
Labor Day	555	624	Amos 5:11-15	Col. 3:23-25	John 6:5-14, 26-27
World Order Sunday	596	632	Mic. 4:1-5	James 4:1-12	Matt. 5:43-48
Reformation Day	570	654	Neh. 8:1-3, 5-8	Gal. 3:23-26	John 2:13-16
Drug and Alcohol Concerns Sunday	554	651	Isa. 5:11-12, 20-24	I Cor. 3:16-17	Luke 21:23-26
National Bible Sunday	593	621	Deut. 30:8-20	Rom. 15:4-13	Luke 4:16-21
Thanksgiving Day	575	607	Deut. 8:7-18	II Cor. 9:6-12	Luke 12:16-31

1st Kingdom
I Chron. 29:10-18
Rev. 1-7, 6-8
Matt 25:31-40

13th
I Chron 28:1-3
Matt 20:20-28
Eph 6:10-20

COMMUNION SERVICE

In Metropolitan Community Churches everywhere, we practice an open communion. Everyone is welcome at this table, you need only come seeking the presence of Jesus the Christ.

At Covenant we practice communion in two ways. First, the ushers will come among you with the elements and you may receive at your seat; or if you wish, you may come forward and be served at the altar.

God be with you.
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them up to God.
Let us give thanks.
It is right to give God thanks and praise.

It is right to glorify you and to give you thanks, for you alone are God, living and true.

Countless throngs of angels stand before you to serve you night and day; and beholding the glory of your presence they offer you unceasing praise. Joining with them and giving voice to every creature under heaven, we acclaim you, and glorify your name, as we sing (say):

Holy, holy, holy God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is the One who comes in the name of our God.
Hosanna in the highest.

God, you loved the world so much that in the fullness of time, you sent Jesus to be our Savior. To the poor Jesus proclaimed the good news of salvation; to prisoners freedom; to the sorrowful, joy. He fed the hungry, healed the sick, ate with the

scorned and forgotten, and gave this meal as a pledge of his abiding presence.

At supper he took bread, and after giving thanks, he broke the bread and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you." When the supper was over, he took the cup and gave thanks. He gave the cup to his disciples and said, "Drink from this all of you; this is the cup of the new covenant in my blood, poured out for you and many for the forgiveness of sins." When we eat this bread and drink this cup we experience anew the presence of the Jesus the Christ and look forward to his coming in final victory.

God, we pray that in your goodness and mercy your Holy Spirit may descend upon us and upon these gifts, sanctifying them and showing them to be holy gifts for your holy people, the bread of life and the cup of salvation, the body and blood of Jesus the Christ. Grant that all who share this bread and cup may become one body and one spirit, a living sacrifice in Christ to the praise of your name.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ, all glory and honor are yours Almighty God, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, forever and ever. Amen.

Let us recall the mystery of our faith:

Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

(The elements are distributed.)

Let us pray:

God, we give you thanks for these holy mysteries which bring to us here on earth a share of the transformed life to come, through Jesus Christ our Savior. May we go in peace to serve God and our neighbor in all that we do. Amen.

COMMUNION SERVICE

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At Covenant we practice communion in two ways. First, the ushers will come among you with the elements and you may receive at your seat; or if you wish, you may come forward and be served at the altar.

God be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to God.

Let us give thanks.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

It is right to glorify you and to give you thanks, for you alone are God, living and true.

Countless throngs of angels stand before you to serve you night and day; and beholding the glory of your presence they offer you unceasing praise. Joining with them and giving voice to every creature under heaven, we acclaim you, and glorify your name, as we sing (say):

Holy, holy, holy God of power and might,

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is the One who comes in the name of our God.

Hosanna in the highest.

God, you loved the world so much that in the fullness of time, you sent Jesus to be our Savior. To the poor Jesus proclaimed the good news of salvation; to prisoners freedom; to the sorrowful, joy. He fed the hungry, healed the sick, ate with the

scorned and forgotten, and gave this meal as a pledge of his abiding presence.

At supper he took bread, and after giving thanks, he broke the bread and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you." When the supper was over, he took the cup and gave thanks. He gave the cup to his disciples and said, "Drink from this all of you; this is the cup of the new covenant in my blood, poured out for you and many for the forgiveness of sins." When we eat this bread and drink this cup we experience anew the presence of the Jesus the Christ and look forward to his coming in final victory.

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